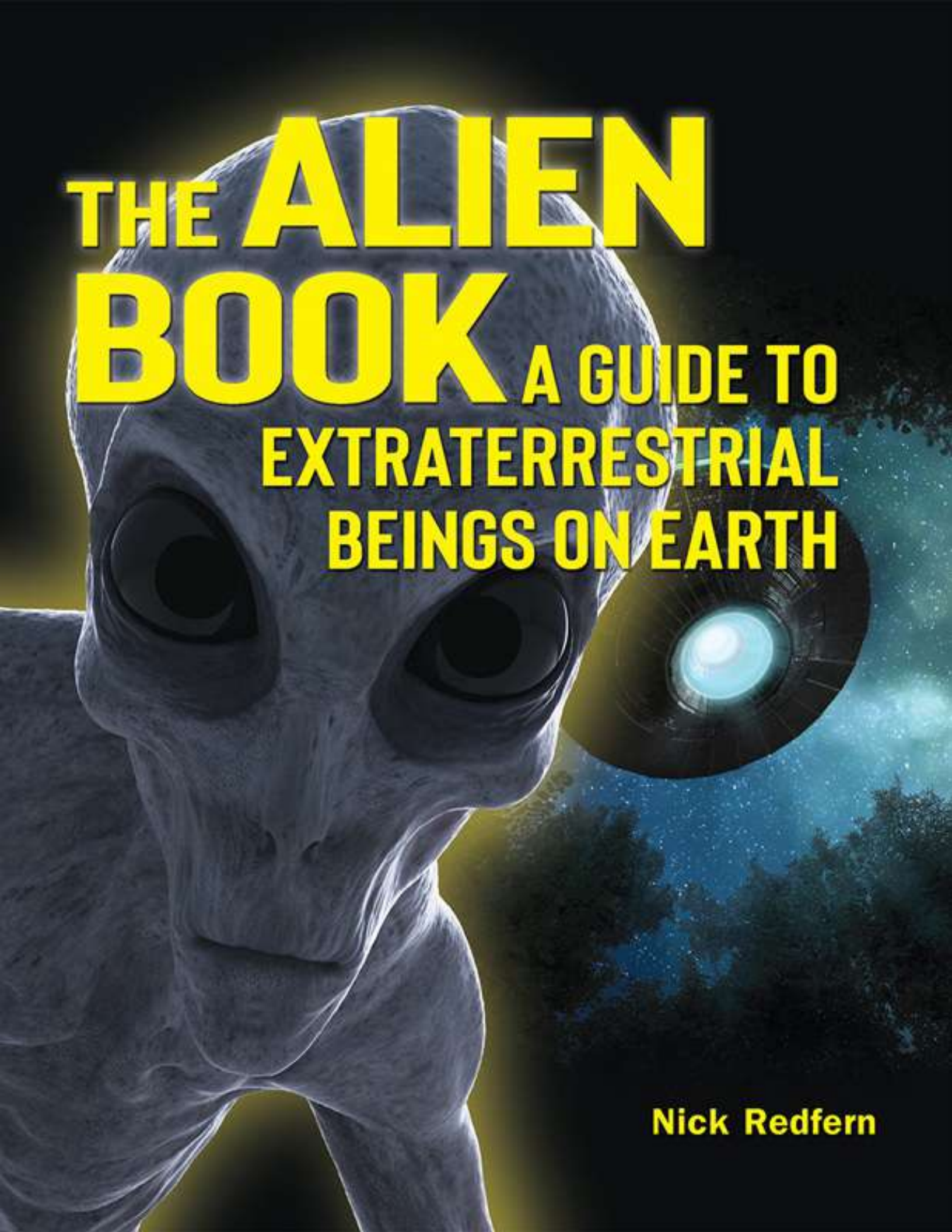
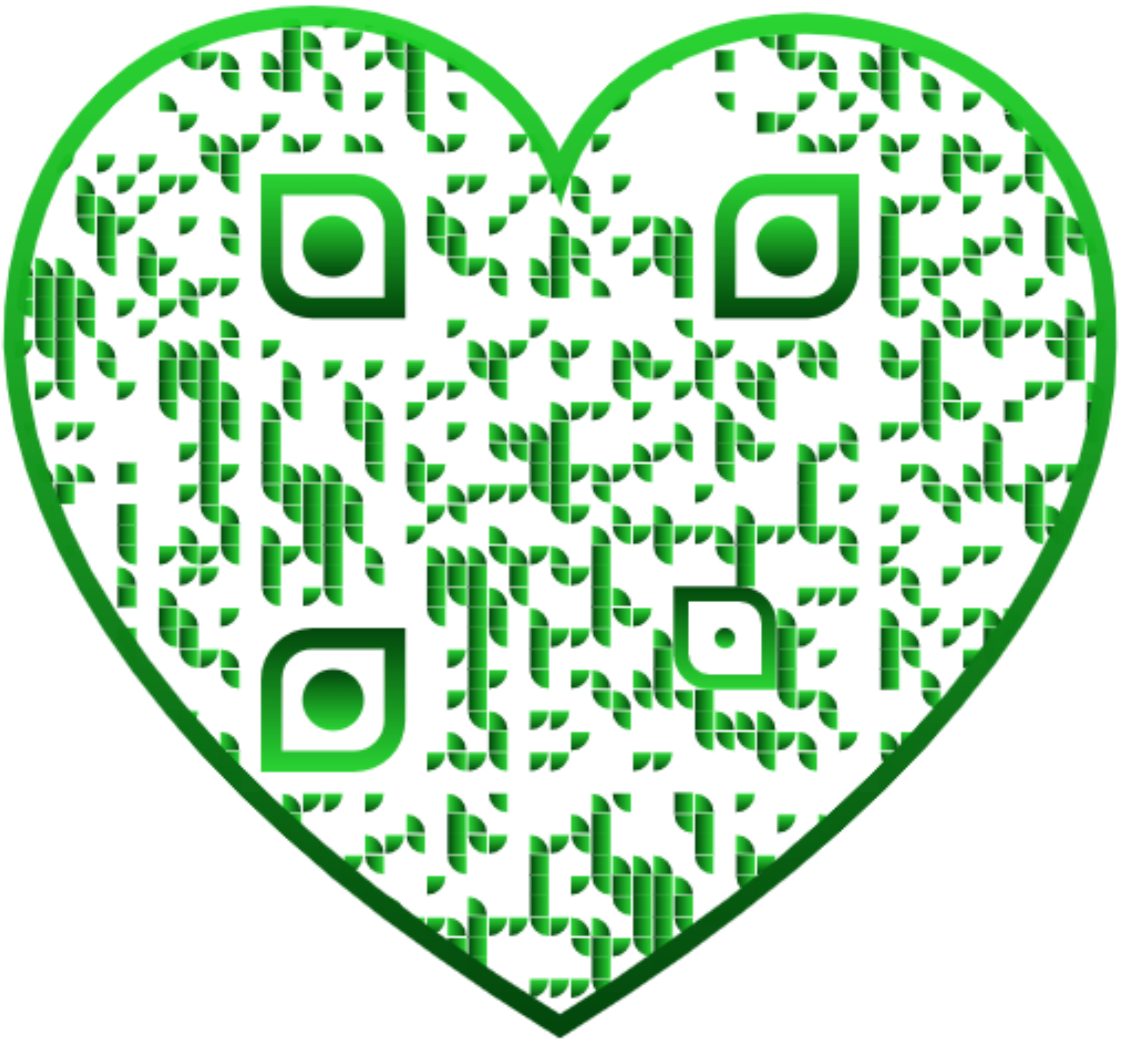

THE ALIEN BOOK
A GUIDE TO EXTRATERRESTRIAL BEINGS ON EARTH
Nick Redfern



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A GUIDE TO
EXTRATERRESTRIALS ON EARTH

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INTRODUCTION

Make mention of the word "alien" and it will almost certainly provoke imagery of black-eyed, large-headed, dwarvish beings that have become known as the Greys. Indeed, they have become a staple part of pop culture, never mind just the field of UFO research. The Greys appeared in Steven Spielberg's classic 1977 movie, Close Encounters of the Third Kind. They regularly popped up in the TV series The X-Files. And, of course, there are numerous people—all across the world—who claim to have been abducted by the Greys and subjected to intrusive medical experiments. The fact is, though, that aliens come in all kinds, appearances, and sizes—as this book demonstrates time and time again.

It may come as a surprise to some that the Greys were nowhere in sight in the 1950s. They weren't on the scene until the early 1960s. Before the black-eyed creatures surfaced, flying saucer researchers were looking into tales of what became known as the "Space Brothers." They were long-haired, very human-looking ETs that warned people of the threat we posed to each other, mainly because of the destructive power of our recently deveoloped atomic weapons. Almost indistinguishable from us, the brothers and (as this book demonstrates) sisters from the stars preferred to meet with people in remote, desert locations rather than touch

down on the White House lawn. Moving on, the 1980s saw the rise of the fiendish Reptilians. The closest things to the monster made famous in Universal's classic 1954 movie Creature from the Black Lagoon, the Reptilians are seven-to-eight-feet-tall monsters, dangerous and predatory shapeshifters that hate the human race. Controversy-filled tales suggest that even the British Royal Family are really morphing monsters of the reptilian kind!

How about the Men in Black? Forget the Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones portrayals of the Men in Black being "secret agents" of the U.S. government. In the real world, the MIB don't act—or even appear—human. Extremely pale-skinned, tall, and with huge eyes, they hide behind large wrap-around sunglasses. The Men in Black are clearly not residents of our world, and neither are their lesser-known comrades, the Women in Black—about whom you will also be learning in this book. Somewhat similar to the MIB are the macabre and terrifying black-eyed children; they are anemic-looking kids with solid-black eyes—hence their name. Are they ETs or ET-human hybrids? Maybe both.

Have you ever considered the possibility that Bigfoot just might be an alien? Most cryptozoologists (a highly pompous term for "monster hunter") consider the Bigfoot creatures of the United States to be an unidentified type of massive ape. The fact is, though, that there are far more than a few cases that involve witnesses claiming to have seen Bigfoot exit a UFO. Strange craft hover above the creatures, illuminating the woods with powerful lights. Witnesses even claim to have seen Bigfoot aboard UFOs. Suggestions have been made that other famous monsters—such as the fiery-eyed Mothman of Point Pleasant, West Virginia (made famous in John Keel's 1975 book, The Mothman Prophecies), the Loch Ness Monster of Scotland, and the werewolf-like Dogmen—

may well be extraterrerstrials. Then there are the jellyfish-style aliens that soar around the skies of our world, according to the research of the late UFO investigator Trevor James Constable. And the list goes on and on. In fact, it's practically unending.

Vicious, hairy dwarfs have been seen exiting UFOs and even trying to kidnap the unfortunate witnesses who crossed their paths, particularly in the jungles of South America. The United Kingdom's Owlman—a feathery, man-like creature with Mothman-type parallels—has ties to the alien abduction phenomenon. The Grinning Man and the Shadow People are dangerous humanoids that terrorize people in the middle of the night by materializing in their bedrooms. They should be avoided at all costs. What about aliens coming to Earth in the form of a virus? For decades, NASA has had guidelines in place to deal with a hazardous—and potentially catastrophic—outbreak of an extraterrestrial germ that just might kill us all. An attack on our planet, which takes us out as a species, might not come via an Independence Day-like attack. Rather, it might come via a decimating alien plague.

It's possible that some of the most legendary characters of the world's cherished religious books might have been aliens. It has been suggested that both Goliath—slain by David, according to the pages of the Old Testament—and King Gilgamesh of The Epic of Gilgamesh were aliens. Maybe nothing less than the legendary Nephilim or the Annunaki were also from another world.

Add to all of that the tales of beings such as space vampires; insect-like aliens that resemble a giant, praying mantis; extraterrestrials who centuries ago may have been behind tales about goblins, fairies and the "little people"; demonic aliens; "frog people"; the notorious and dangerous skinwalkers of Native American history; extraterrestrial robots; and much more, and what do you get? I'll tell you: an absolute plethora of alien entities

visiting our planet, some for benign reasons and others for downright deadly and disturbing purposes. Aliens come in all sizes, shapes, and colors. Some are friendly. Others are anything but friendly. They all have one thing in common: the human race has encountered them. And we continue to encounter them today, not just in dozens or in hundreds but in thousands of incidents. With all of that now said, it's time for you to come with me on an adventurous trek in search of aliens.

ANUNNAKI ANCIENTS

Within the history and lore of ancient Mesopotamia—which comprised parts of what today are Syria, Iran, Kuwait, Iraq, and Turkey—the most legendary, revered, unearthly beings were known as the Anunnaki. They were entities that, over the last few decades, have collectively become an integral part of "ancient astronaut" research. This is hardly surprising since the word "Anunnaki" literally translates into English as "those who from the heavens came to earth" and is taken from the name of an ancient god of the skies, Anu. On top of that, Mesopotamia is acknowledged as being one of the key places on the planet where human civilization began.

This has all given rise to the idea that, far from being the literal deities that many take them to have been, the Anunnaki were

visiting astronauts from a faraway world, ones who tried to bring stability and culture to the previously primitive people of Earth—although specifically for their benefit rather than for ours.

Although the Anunnaki have been depicted as definitively Reptilian-like in appearance, many also believe that they were very humanlike in appearance but much taller, perhaps even in the region of eight to twelve feet tall. It is this belief that has led to suggestions that the Anunnaki, and their half-human offspring, were the legendary "giants" of the Old Testament.

It has also been suggested that the Anunnaki were very much a chthonic body of entities—that's to say they were the denizens of a dark underworld, but whether they were gods, visitors from a faraway solar system, or a highly advanced race of humans who dwelled deep underground, no one can deny that they left a profound mark on the people of Mesopotamia.

Researcher Lawrence Gardner says of the Anunnaki: "Every item of written and pictorial attestation confirms that the ancient Sumerians were absolutely sincere about the existence of the Anunnaki, and those such as Enki, Enlil, Nin-khursag and Inanna fulfilled earthly functions with designated community duties. They were patrons and founders; they were teachers and justices; they were technologists and kingmakers. They were jointly and severally venerated as archons and masters, but there were certainly not idols of religious worship as the ritualistic gods of subsequent cultures became. In fact, the word which was eventually translated to become 'worship' was avod, which meant quite simply, 'work.' The Anunnaki presence may baffle historians, their language may confuse linguists and their advanced techniques may bewilder scientists, but to dismiss them is foolish. The Sumerians have themselves told us precisely who the Anunnaki were, and neither history nor science can prove

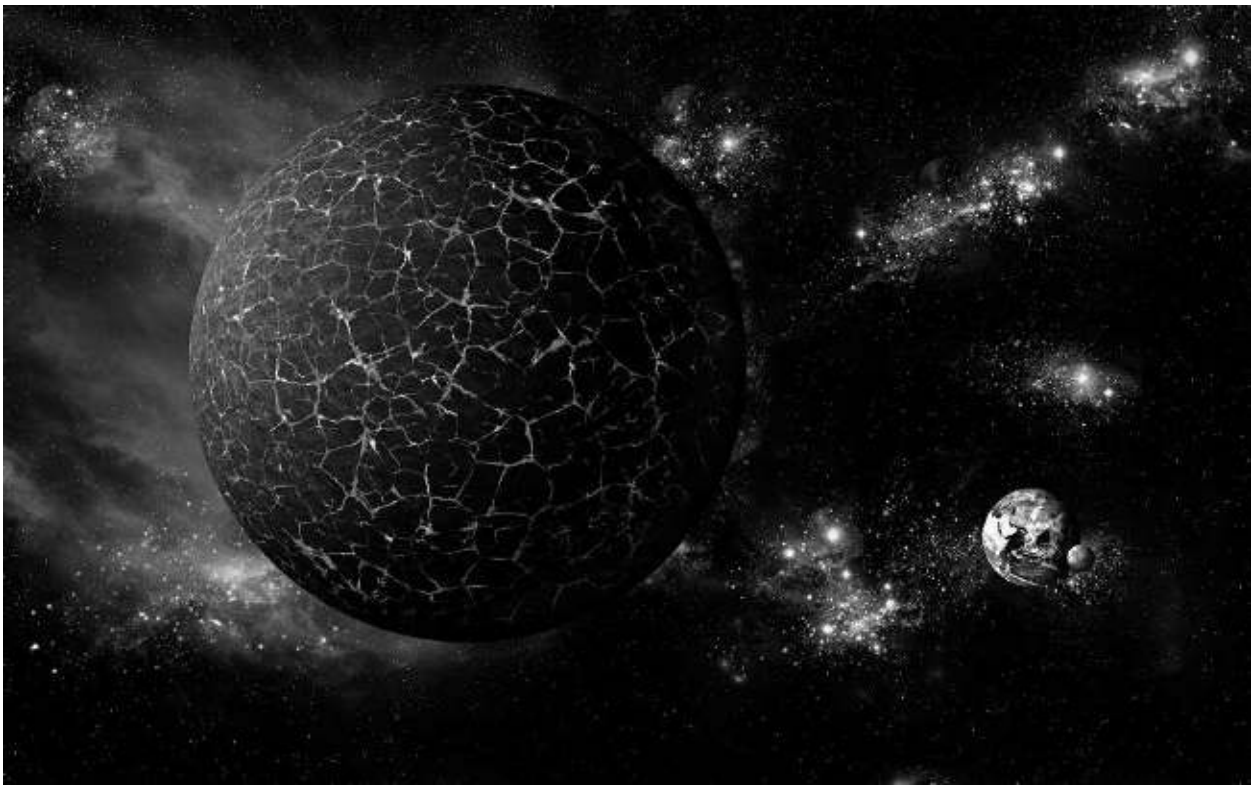
otherwise."

Undoubtedly, the dominating player in the development of the theory that the Anunnaki were ancient extraterrestrials was the late Zecharia Sitchin. Over the course of several decades and numerous books, Sitchin formulated a startling scenario in relation to these legendary beings from afar. He concluded that the Anunnaki were the inhabitants of a vast, faraway planet that has been referred to as both Nibiru and Planet X. Sitchin believed—rather controversially, it must be stressed—that Nibiru is actually a resident of our very own solar system. Its orbit around the Sun is so near-infinitely gigantic, however, that it is only viewable every few thousand years, he concluded. Sitchin also believed that he had discovered the exact time cycle:

"The Mesopotamian and biblical sources present strong evidence that the orbital period of the 12th Planet is 3,600 years. The number 3,600 was written in Sumerian as a large circle. The epithet for the planet, shar, also meant 'a perfect circle' or 'a completed cycle'. It also meant the number 3,600. The identity of the three terms—planet/orbit/3,600—could not be a mere coincidence. The reign periods (a Sumarian text) gives are also perfect multiples of the 3,600 year shar. The conclusion that suggests itself is that these shar's of rulership were related to the orbital period shar, 3,600 years."

These statuettes from Mesopotamia are dated to be about four thousand years old. Depicting four gods, they are stamped with the name "Gudea," who was the ruler of Lagash, a city in Sumeria.

Sitchin portrayed Nibiru as a planet very much on its last legs, one whose atmosphere was degrading—which could have spelled the end for the Anunnaki had they not chosen to take certain actions that had major implications for the human race. The Anunnaki elected to hold off their demise by using and exploiting Earth and its people to ensure their survival. It was gold—specifically our gold—that the Anunnaki needed to stabilize their fraught situation. The plan was to flood their planet's atmosphere with gold dust, thus keeping deadly ultraviolet rays at bay.



An artist's conception of the doomed planet Nibiru, the home world of the Anunnaki.

While on Earth, said Sitchin, the Anunnaki chose to do two things in particular: (a) they embarked on a program to turn what amounted to the human race into a subservient, slavelike species and (b) they began to genetically manipulate us. In part, this was done via sophisticated science and technology—perhaps not unlike so-called gene-splicing techniques that we are now developing. They also utilized the tried-and-tested way that has worked since time immemorial: sex. The fact that male Anunnaki were supposedly able to mate—successfully—with human women suggests a common, and even more ancient, lineage and connection between the two species.

As for when all of this took place, the time frame is somewhat confusing. Sitchin took the view that the initial Anunnaki journey to our world occurred more than four hundred thousand years ago and resulted in the Anunnaki landing in certain parts of both Africa and the Middle East. With outposts constructed, the Anunnaki set about their controversial process of mutating early Homo erectus into what today is Homo sapiens. The long-term plan to create millions of human slaves—all under the extraterrestrial thumb of their masters—was well underway, but one problem existed.

Perhaps unforeseen by the Anunnaki, their tinkering with the human race and their attempts to upgrade us, and turn us into robust, unquestioning slaves, had a side effect: the human race grew quickly and spread far and wide to the point where we were eventually seen as troublesome entities in danger of becoming unmanageable to the Anunnaki. The Anunnaki saw an answer to the problem of the growing human infestation, however. Around 10,500 B.C.E., concluded Sitchin, Nibiru passed perilously close to Earth. Its huge gravitational pull had an overwhelmingly disastrous effect on our planet to the extent that it led to a huge, worldwide flood, as described in numerous ancient texts, such as the Bible and the Koran. It also killed millions of those humans that the Anunnaki were becoming increasingly concerned about. Those spared the massive destruction were then used, in slavish style, to help create the vast, stone structures of the Middle East, South America, Central America, Mexico, India, and Pakistan and also to mine for the gold that their bullying alien masters demanded.

It was Sitchin's belief that, in the postflood era, the Anunnaki decided that their main base of operations would be Sumer, which is situated in Mesopotamia's southern regions and dominated by both the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Although conventional

archaeology suggests that Sumer was inhabited—and well on its way to becoming one of the earliest truly civilized places on the planet—several thousand years ago, Sitchin suggested the Sumer people may have been introduced to the area by the Anunnaki long before that—or, at the very least, used and even genetically manipulated to allow them to technologically progress with phenomenal speed. Then, said Sitchin, with their work done and their gold harvested, the Anunnaki left. That's not quite the whole story, however; the civilization of Sumer came to its end as mysteriously as it flourished.

Ancient astronaut proponents have suggested that the people of Sumer may have been obliterated by Anunnaki-created atomic weapons. As for why, perhaps it was in order to further keep the human race in check now that the Anunnaki had secured all they needed from our world, or it may have been that the conflict was provoked by warring factions of the Anunnaki, ones who had gone from exploiting the human race to fighting each other.

This ziggurat (in present-day Iraq) dedicated to the moon god Nanna was constructed in the city of Ur during the Sumerian Renaissance. The Sumerians may have thrived with the Anunnaki to help, only to then be destroyed by the aliens.

The official website of Zecharia Sitchin states: "At the end of the third millennium B.C. the great Sumerian civilization came to an abrupt end. Its sudden demise was bewailed in numerous lamentation texts that have been discovered by archeologists. The texts ascribed the calamity to an Evil Wind that came blowing from the west (from the direction of the Mediterranean Sea)—a deathly cloud that caused excruciating death to all living beings, people and animals alike, that withered plants and poisoned the waters.

"In The Wars of Gods and Men (third book of "The Earth Chronicles" series), Zecharia Sitchin saw an explanation of the sudden death in a long text known to scholars as The Erra Epos, that described a chain of events that ultimately led to the use of 'Weapons of Terror' in a conflict between opposing clans of the Anunnaki.

"Zecharia Sitchin concluded that the Weapons of Terror were nuclear weapons. Used to obliterate the spaceport that then existed in the Sinai Peninsula (and some 'sinning cities' such as Sodom and Gomorrah), the nuclear cloud then was carried by the prevailing winds eastward, causing death and desolation in the Lands Between the Rivers (Mesopotamia)—the empire of Sumer and Akkad.

"Besides claiming that nuclear weapons were first used on Earth not in the 1940's in Hiroshima but thousands of years earlier in the Near East, Zecharia also pinpointed the date: 2024 B.C.!"

Millennia-old texts tell of a massive and sudden event that occurred just west of Sumer and that may have wiped out the people and their culture. From today's context, it sounds eerily like an out-of-the-blue, nuclear strike. Translated into English, it reads like this:

> On the land [Sumer] fell a calamity, one unknown to man;
> one that had never been seen before,
> one which could not be withstood. A great storm from heaven
> A land-annihilating storm
> An evil wind, like a rushing torrent
> A battling storm joined by a scorching heat
> By day it deprived the land of the bright sun, in the evening the stars did not shine
> The people, terrified, could hardly breathe;
> the evil wind clutched them, does not grant them another day
> Mouths were drenched with blood, heads wallowed in blood.
> The face was made pale by the Evil Wind.
> It caused cities to be desolated, houses to become desolate;
> stalls to become desolate, the sheepfolds to be emptied
> Sumer's rivers it made flow with water that is bitter;
> its cultivated fields grow weeds, its pastures grow withering plants.

So much for the story of the Anunnaki in the distant past; it's now time to take a trip forward in time to the very recent past.

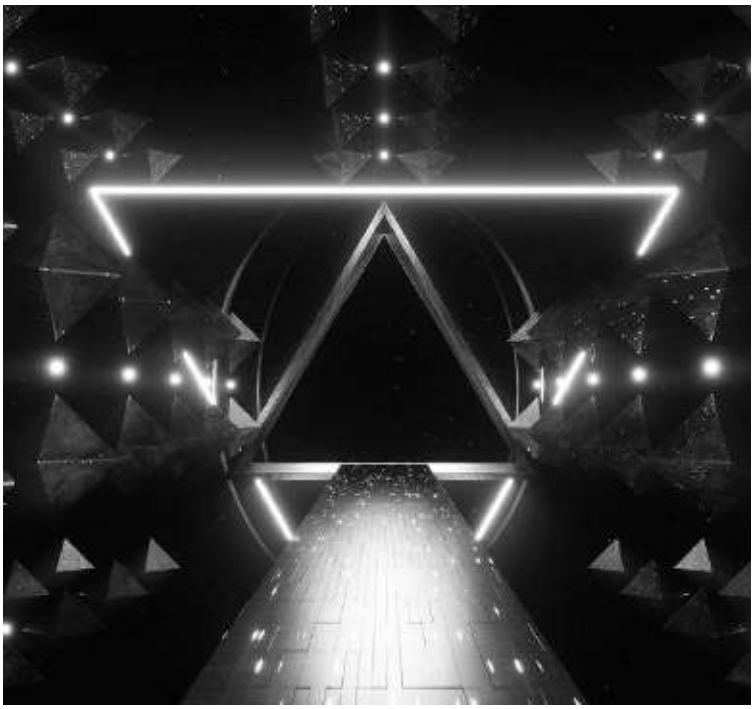
In 2003, when the Iraq War began—significant portions of which were fought in what was once Mesopotamia—a controversial story surfaced that suggested that the saga of the Anunnaki was not over, after all. It was a story that came from a UFO researcher and author named Michael Salla. He claimed to have uncovered the strands of a fantastic secret: part of the reason why the war on Iraq went ahead, said Salla, was because people working under President George W. Bush had stumbled upon stories suggesting that, somewhere in Iraq, an ancient Anunnaki device called a stargate existed.

In essence, it was a highly advanced piece of technology that would allow the user to travel nearly instantaneously from one part of the universe to another—in fact, to just about anywhere and everywhere. If the technology could be understood, it would surely allow the user to eventually, and probably with astonishing speed, dominate the entire planet, so the race was on to try to find the stargate—albeit under the ingenious guise of a mission to topple Saddam Hussein.

Prior to the downfall and death of Hussein, Salla said: "From the perspective of the Bush administration, control of the Sumerian star-gate would enable clandestine government organizations to continue their global campaign of non-disclosure of the ET presence."

He continued: "On the part of Hussein Regime, control of the star-gate would allow him to activate it and to fulfill prophesy by facilitating the return of an advanced race of ETs, the elite Anunnaki. President Hussein probably imagines that in return for his loyalty to the elite Anunnaki, he would be rewarded with a position of great global authority. Perhaps he would even see

himself as some kind of human savior facilitating the return of the gods who would solve all of humanity's problems, and end the rule of clandestine government organizations perpetuating non-disclosure of the ET presence."



Did aliens leave behind a stargate in what is now Iraq? And did the George W. Bush administration discover its existence, which was the real reason behind the invasion of that country in 2003?

Of course, such a thing never happened and, as history has shown us, Saddam Hussein was thankfully soon no more. Was the story true? Was a real, ancient, Anunnaki-created stargate found by U.S. military personnel at the height of the Iraqi War? Could this rather than the overthrow of Saddam Hussein have been the primary reason for the invasion? If the answers are yes, this begs an even bigger, and far more serious, question: what if, one day, the Anunnaki return and decide to take back that incredible piece of technology?

As we will soon see, a number of alleged whistle-blowers are in circulation who have revealed masses of what appears to be highly classified data on UFOs, extraterrestrial life, and alien activities on Earth. Undoubtedly, the most well-known of all is Bob Lazar, who in 1989 blew the whistle on what he claimed was a top-secret program at Area 51's S-4 facility, at which the back-engineering of extraterrestrial spacecraft was going ahead. Another person who has come forward to tell the world what he knows is Charles Hall. He claims knowledge of one particular type of alien at Area 51 that has become known as the "Tall Whites." As their title makes clear, in appearance, they are far removed from the dwarfish Greys.

According to Hall—a nuclear physicist—back in 1964, he was working at Nellis Air Force Base, a facility inextricably tied to Area 51 and its secret programs of numerous kinds. Hall continued that while on that certain area of the Nevada landscape, which is out of bounds to almost everyone, he "witnessed interactions between the military and a group of mysterious tall, white, human-like extraterrestrials."

Giant-sized, albinolike aliens engaged in programs with the U.S. government? That's pretty much the scenario, yes. Seeing the aliens, up close and personal—so to speak—was daunting, said Hall: "It's such a shock, you are not sure if you are looking at a ghost or an angel, or if you are dreaming."

Hall also claimed that the aliens' craft were capable of traveling at speeds beyond the speed of light. Einstein, then, was wrong, or, at best, his theory was vastly unfinished, if you consider Hall's account to be the gospel truth. Hall went on to make even more controversial claims. He said that he didn't just

encounter the Tall Whites—whose heights extend to around seven and a half feet—but also the Greys and what were termed "Norwegians," who appear very humanlike and who have a good command of the English language.

Just a few miles outside of Las Vegas, Nevada, is Nellis Air Force Base, a facility linked to Area 51. It was here that physicist Charles Hall said he saw "white, human-like extraterrestrials interacting with military personnel."

It has been suggested that Charles Hall's Tall Whites may actually have been none other than the Anunnaki, who are said to be ancient extraterrestrials who first visited Earth hundreds of thousands of years ago and who were responsible for our beliefs and legends concerning our gods. More than four hundred

thousand years before a huge deluge devastated Earth and killed untold millions, researcher Zecharia Sitchin believed, a mighty race of legendary giants came to our planet from the heavens above—and, during their time here, brought some form of stability, and even society, to what were then extremely primitive human tribes. As for the physical descriptions of the Anunnaki, theories vary from giants of eight to ten feet tall to bipedal reptiles, with some researchers concluding that they may well have been both—the power of shapeshifting allowing them to manifest in various guises. Rather notably, the Anunnaki have also been depicted as albinos.

This particular scenario, referred to above, of the Anunnaki performing a teaching role to the people of Earth was a staple part of Sumerian beliefs and lore and remains an important piece of historical record.

Bob Lazar revealed that out at S-4, "there is an extremely classified document dealing with religion, and it's extremely thick. But why should there be any classified documents dealing with religion?" That's a very good question. The answer that Lazar got from the briefing papers provided to him by his colleagues at Area 51 was that we, the human race, are not the product of a god—or even of multiple gods. Lazar maintained that the documentation he read revealed that "we were made by progressive corrections in evolution," specifically by highly advanced extraterrestrials in the distant past.

Is it possible that an Anunnaki presence exists at Area 51? Such a question is controversial in the extreme. If such an ancient alien race is secretly interacting with a small number of U.S. military personnel and scientists, it's hardly surprising that such a story would be buried just about as deeply as possible. After all, how can the world be told that no gods exist? They are just aliens

who tinkered with our DNA to the point that Homo sapiens were finally synthesized and acceptable to the Anunnaki. It must be stressed, though, that this is all dependent on Charles Hall's statements being accurate and the files that Lazar read out at S-4 being the real deal rather than sophisticated disinformation. Once again, we end up with more questions than we do answers.

AURA RHANES

Truman Bethurum was a Californian born in 1898 who spent many of his early years working jobs that never seemed to last. His first marriage both began and crumbled during the Second World War. He entered into a second marriage only several months after the war ended and ultimately wound up working out in the harsh, hot deserts of Nevada—specifically in the highway construction game. It was while Bethurum was out in the desert in 1952, while his second wife, Mary, was stuck at home in Santa Barbara, that Bethurum claimed that he had an extremely close encounter with extraterrestrials on Mormon Mesa, a near-two-thousand-foot-high mount in Nevada's Moapa Valley.

On the fateful night in question after the working day was over, Bethurum climbed the mountain primarily to search for

shells, something that Mary particularly enjoyed collecting. The story goes that Bethurum was rendered into a strange, altered state of mind, during which aliens from another world suddenly manifested before him, having arrived in a huge, gleaming, flying saucer that quietly descended to the desert floor. Although only around four-foot-five to five feet in height, the aliens were eerily human looking and claimed to come from a faraway planet called Clarion. Not only that, their leader was one Captain Aura Rhanes, a shapely woman who the near-salivating Bethurum described as being "tops in shapeliness and beauty." All thoughts of Mary—back in Santa Barbara—were suddenly gone from Bethurum's mind.

Bethurum's odd story continued and grew at a steady and controversial pace, as did his relationship with the flirty Captain Rhanes. For months, Bethurum and Rhanes had clandestine meetings, usually late at night. They generally occurred in isolated desert locations in Nevada, where, after Rhanes's huge ship landed, the pair had long and deep conversations about the state of Earth, the Cold War, and the captain's home world—to which she promised to take Bethurum one day. While Bethurum did not explicitly say so, more than a few nuggets of data in Bethurum's collective work suggest that on a couple of occasions, the pair had just about the closest and most intimate encounters of all. It's hardly surprising, then, that many students of ufology outright dismiss Bethurum's story as either a hoax or a fantasy born out of Bethurum's unhappiness with both wife number one and wife number two (eventually, wife number three would also exist). However, one particularly fascinating aspect of Bethurum's claimed experiences has a significant bearing upon the matter of the Women in Black.

On two occasions, Bethurum said, he encountered Aura Rhanes under circumstances very different from those that occurred out in the desert with Rhanes's huge flying saucer and her crew of little men in view. These additional encounters saw Rhanes operating in what can only be termed disguise: definitive Woman in Black mode. Nothing flirty or friendly occurred on these close encounters, however; they were downright hostile. The first occurred around 3:00 A.M.—a time when a wealth of supernatural activity typically occurs—one August 1952 morning. Bethurum and a work friend, Whitey, had just finished their shift and decided to head off in Whitey's pickup truck to a favorite all-night diner in Glendale, Nevada. Whitey was someone who Bethurum had quietly confided in about his experiences with Aura Rhanes. He was also someone who, although fascinated by Bethurum's claims, was somewhat skeptical of the story until they entered the diner. Any skepticism Whitey had was very soon to be wiped out.

As the pair sat and drank coffee and ate pie, a noticeably quiet Whitey elbowed Bethurum in the ribs and motioned him to take a look at the end of the counter. Bethurum looked up. He was amazed and shocked to see Aura Rhanes, and an equally small male individual, standing there.

Moapa Valley (pictured) in Nevada is where Mormon Mesa is located, and there Truman Bethurum encountered Captain Rhanes of the planet Clarion.

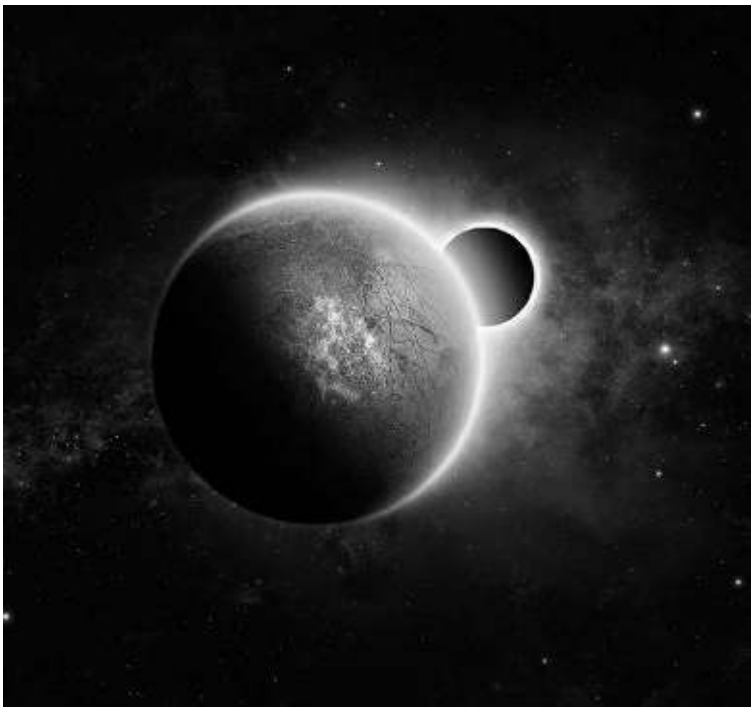
"It's her, isn't it?" asked Whitey. Bethurum nodded, pretty much in a state of near-shock. Both men watched carefully as Rhanes and her colleague took seats at a window table. In stark contrast to everyone else in the diner, Rhanes was dressed in black: black beret, wraparound black sunglasses, black velvet blouse, and black boots. The only thing that wasn't black: a "glaring red" skirt.

A worried Whitey asked: "What are you going to do?" Bethurum knew exactly what he was going to do: compose himself, walk over, and talk to them. Whitey, however, was having none of it. He quickly exited the diner, preferring to sit in his truck in the overwhelming darkness of the desert rather than confront creatures from another world.

Perhaps trying to be a gentleman and tactful at the same time, Bethurum asked, "I beg your pardon, lady, but haven't we met

before?"

Rhanes slowly looked up, glared at Bethurum with a wide-eyed and hostile stare, and uttered just one word: "No." In private correspondence with fellow contactee George Hunt Williamson, Bethurum said that Rhanes's "no" was uttered in a chilling, demonic tone, almost like a "deadly hiss," to use Bethurum's own words.



Captain Rhanes claimed to come from the alien planet Clarion.

Bethurum wasn't taking that for an answer: "You very closely resemble a lady I met some time ago out on Mormon Mesa."

The only response was another "no" of a very threatening style. Bethurum evidently didn't get the message. He blundered on with his line of questions. The answer was the same again and again. All the time, the weird little man with Rhanes—who also sported dark sunglasses—said not even a single word. Bethurum clearly recognized this odd behavior (or, rather, non-behavior) on

the part of Rhanes's comrade: "The man did not give a hint that he either heard me or was even aware of my presence. He could have passed as a blind [and] deaf mute."

As Bethurum walked away, and back to his table, the waitress came over—she just happened to be someone else that Bethurum had told of his otherworldly experiences. She said to him, "They are surely the saucer people you told us about."

He replied, "I thought so, too. But it may not be. The lady has on dark glasses and the man had a scar on his face."

The waitress gave a strange response: "I noticed that too, but it is not a scar. It is only penciled on."

With that, the odd, little man motioned for the check. In a few moments, it was paid, and the pair headed for the door. The waitress raced over to Bethurum and said, "The lady told me to tell you that she knows you, and that she was sorry and 'yes' is the answer to some of your questions."

It was then that something very strange happened, as Bethurum noted: "I saw them only a step from the door, before I turned to pay my check. When I turned back they were gone. I rushed outside, and there stood Whitey puffing nonchalantly on his cigarette."

When a dumbfounded Bethurum asked where the pair was, Whitey replied, "They never came out. Honest, Tru; not a blessed soul passed through that door until you came out."

Things were not over, however.

Just a couple of weeks later, on a Saturday afternoon, Bethurum was having his hair trimmed at a barber shop in Las Vegas when he caught sight of Aura Rhanes yet again. This time, she was walking along the sidewalk outside the barber's—wearing her same outfit of black sunglasses, black beret, black blouse, and

red skirt. Bethurum practically threw his dollars and coins at the astonished barber and raced out the door.

"Lady! Lady!" cried Bethurum as he caught sight of Rhanes about sixty feet ahead of him. She quickly turned, looked directly at him—despite the fact that the street was crowded and the shout could have come from any number of dozens of people on the sidewalk—and slowly shook her head. The stone-cold look on her face was one of pure evil. Bethurum got the message as Rhanes vanished into the crowd. Nevertheless, it wasn't long before the nighttime liaisons in the desert were renewed, which continued until November 2, 1952, when the little people of Clarion finally said their goodbyes. A crushed Bethurum was never to see his beautiful woman from the stars again. Maybe, as we've seen, that is, sometimes beautiful, but other times nothing but hostile.

"Little people" is a very appropriate term to use since clear and undeniable parallels exist between Aura Rhanes and the legendary female "fairy-folk" who would enchant men in Middle Ages-era Britain. The sexual aspects of such encounters, combined with notable amounts of missing time, make them the centuries-old mirror images of today's alien abductions. Was Aura Rhanes a twentieth-century equivalent of a fairylike "elemental"? Perhaps, yes.

Although the story of Truman Bethurum most assuredly stretches credibility to the max, it's important to note that it's filled with both WIB-and MIB-themed lore that simply was not in the public domain at the time in question, namely, the early years of the 1950s.

BIG GREY MAN

A large and mysterious mountain in a Scottish range called the Cairngorms, Ben Macdhui is said to be the lair of a sinister, lumbering, Bigfoot-like creature known as Am Fear Liath Mòr, the Big Grey Man (BGM). Legends of its existence date back centuries, and they show no signs of stopping. Although definitively animal-like in both nature and appearance, the Big Grey Man reputedly possesses paranormal powers that allow it to plunge the unwary traveler into states of terror and panic—a form of monster-based mind control, one might be justified in suggesting. Interestingly, the Cairngorms have for many years been the site of UFO encounters, which suggests a direct connection between the Big Grey Man and UFOs.

Without doubt, the foremost expert on the BGM is anomalies

expert Andy Roberts. Andy has noted that witnesses to the creepy phenomenon describe how they have heard heavy footsteps on the fog-shrouded mountain, felt a distinct sensation of a threatening presence, and experienced an over-whelming feeling of unbridled terror. The experience is graphic enough to compel witnesses to flee—in fear of their lives—and, in some cases, to run wildly in crazed, fear-filled fashion for miles. Taking into consideration the fact that encounters almost exclusively take place on rocky, dangerous ground and often in weather conditions involving mist and snow, Andy stresses that "we should not underestimate the power of the experience."

As far as can be determined, the first encounter of any real note with the BGM occurred in 1791. The witness was a poet and shepherd named James Hogg. He reported seeing a massive figure on Ben Macdhui, which appeared to manifest out of a strange halo. Says Andy: "As he watched the halo which had formed around him due to the combination of sunshine and mist he suddenly noticed a huge, looming figure. It was vaguely human in shape and he imagined it to be the devil. Hogg fled in terror, not stopping until he reached fellow shepherds."

Then, from 1831, we have the following from Sir Thomas Dick Lauder. In his own words:

"On descending from the top (of Ben Mac Dhui) at about half-past three P.M., an interesting optical appearance presented itself to our view. We had turned towards the east, and the sun shone on our backs, when we saw a very bright rainbow described on the mist before us. The bow, of beautifully distinct prismatic colors, formed about two-thirds of a circle, the extremities of which appeared to rest on the lower portion of the mountain. In the center of this incomplete circle there was described a luminous disc, surrounded by the prismatic colors displayed in concentric

rings. On the disc itself, each of the party (three in number), as they stood about fifty yards apart, saw his own figure most distinctly delineated, although those of the other two were invisible to him. The representation appeared of the natural size, and the outline of the whole person of the spectator was most correctly portrayed. To prove that the shadow seen by each individual was that of himself, we resorted to various gestures, such as waving our hats, flapping our plaids, &c., all which motions were exactly followed by the airy figure."

Moving onto the twentieth century, in 1921, the Cairngorm Club Journal reported that a recent letter writer "called attention to a myth prevalent in Upper Deeside to the effect that a big spectral figure has been seen at various times during the last five years walking about on the tops of the Cairngorms. When approached, so the story goes, the figure disappears."

Andy Roberts reveals a further layer of the puzzle:

Scottish and poet and novelist James Hogg reported seeing a massive figure on Ben Macdhui, which appeared to manifest out of a strange halo.

"In 1924, Dr. Ernest A. Baker's book, The Highlands with Rope and Rucksack, appeared. Here, Baker relates the experience of a friend whose job took him into the mountains, a deer stalker or perhaps a shepherd. Alone on Ben Macdhui one day he became aware of a terrifying presence which Afleck Grey [the author of the book The Big Grey Man of Ben Macdhui] recounts, 'disturbed him in a manner which was beyond his experience.' Grey makes the point that this was no ordinary fear but something so powerful that Baker's friend fled from Ben Macdhui, the terror only subsiding when he reached low ground. Baker also reports how one mountain climber had told him that he would under no circumstances spend any time on Ben Macdhui alone, even in

daylight."

One year later, in 1925, Professor Norman Collie revealed the facts concerning his very own encounter with the Big Grey Man decades earlier. Collie recalled:

"I was returning from the cairn on the summit in a mist when I began to think I heard something else than merely the noise of my own footsteps. For every few steps I took I heard a crunch, and then another crunch as if someone was walking after me but taking steps three or four times the length of my own. I said to myself: This is all nonsense. I listened and heard it again but could see nothing in the mist. As I walked on and the eerie crunch, crunch, sounded behind me I was seized with terror and took to my heels, staggering blindly among the boulders for four or five miles nearly down to Rothiemurchus Forest. Whatever you make of it I do not know, but there is something very queer about the top of Ben Macdhui and I will not go back there by myself, I know."

A man named Alexander Tewnion told of his very own encounter with the terrifying thing of Ben Macdhui in the 1940s:

"In October 1943 I spent a ten day leave climbing alone in the Cairngorms. One afternoon, just as I reached the summit cairn of Ben MacDhui, mist swirled across the Lairig Ghru and enveloped the mountain. The atmosphere became dark and oppressive, a fierce, bitter wind whisked among the boulders, and an odd sound echoed through the mist—a loud footstep, it seemed. Then another, and another. A strange shape loomed up, receded, came charging at me! Without hesitation I whipped out the revolver and fired three times at the figure. When it still came on I turned and hared down the path, reaching Glen Derry in a time that I have never bettered. You may ask was it really the Fear Laith Mhor? Frankly, I think it was."

Cryptozoologist Dr. Karl Shuker says: "Even more incredible, however, was the entity reportedly spied one night on Ben MacDhui by a friend of climber–writer Richard Frere. Having pitched a tent beside the Cairn, Frere's friend awoke, to see a brown shape standing between his tent and the moon. So as soon as the shape moved away, his friend peered outside his tent, only to discover (according to Frere's subsequent description, which follows) that just 20 yards away … a great brown creature was swaggering down the hill. He uses the word 'swaggering' because the creature had an air of insolent strength about it: and because it rolled slightly from side to side, taking huge measured steps. It looked as though it was covered with shortish, brown hair … its head was disproportionately large, its neck very thick and powerful. By the extreme width of its shoulders compared to the relative slimness of its hips he concluded its sex to be male. No, it did not resemble an ape: its hairy arms, though long, were not unduly so, its carriage was extremely erect."

A sensational story surfaced in 2004 from Tom Robertson, a noted expert on paranormal phenomena and the author of Ghosthunter: Adventures in the Afterlife. While on Ben Macdhui in July 2004, Robertson and a colleague had a nerve-jangling experience at an altitude of around four thousand feet, as Robertson made abundantly clear:

"At about 1:00 A.M., after we climbed into our sleeping bags we heard the footsteps of something coming to the tent and heard mumbling noises outside. I looked through the air vent in the roof and saw a large arm crashing down. The figure of what seemed like a yeti was standing over the tent, then all hell broke loose and it was trying to get at us. I remember something landed on my foot. My toes are black, kind of bruised. I have never been so scared in all the sixty years I have been interested in such things. I

don’t know what it is, but it isn’t human. I reckon it could be the Grey Man or something from outer space.”

From September 2006, we have the following from someone using the pseudonym of “Big Max.” He or she states:

The top of Ben Macdhui in Scotland is often shrouded in fog. Locals tell of a five-meter-tall spectre that follows people around but disappears when approached.

“I was climbing back down Ben MacDhui in May 1988 when I experienced the footsteps phenomenon mentioned by others. It was pretty misty and I was alone. But it was like ‘something’ was behind me, only 10 meters [33 feet] or so, keeping track of me. I back-tracked to see if anyone was there. I didn’t see anything, but it was weird enough to scare me, particularly as the sounds occurred both when I was moving or stationary. It was only after I told this story to a Glasgow cousin years later that I first heard about the Grey Man.”

As for what the Big Grey Man may be, Dr. Karl Shuker says: "During the 1970s, inorganic chemistry specialist Dr. Don Robins proposed that some minerals may be capable of encoding a type of electrical energy, in turn yielding a moving image that could be projected under certain specific conditions, i.e. a veritable geological hologram. Could it be that the BGM is one such hologram, stimulated by certain specific, mountain-related mineralogical attributes, and exhibiting an additional aural component?"

Horrific hologram or Scottish Bigfoot, the mystery of Ben Macdhui's Big Grey Man lives on.

As for the final word, it goes to Peter Densham, who, as the leader of the Royal Air Force Rescue Team from 1939 to 1945, was very familiar with Ben Macdhui and its mysterious, foggy and snowy surroundings. He said of the BGM enigma:

"Tell me that the whine was but the result of relaxed eardrums, and the presence was only the creation of a mind that was accustomed to take too great an interest in such things. I shall not be convinced. Come, rather, with me at the mysterious dusk time when day and night struggle upon the mountains. Feel the night wind on your faces, and hear it crying amid rocks. See the desert uplands consumed before the racing storms. Though your nerves be of steel, and your mind says it cannot be, you will be acquainted with that fear without name, that intense dread of the unknown that has pursued mankind from the very dawn of time."

It's very important to note that Ben Macdhui was the site of an intriguing UFO encounter, which suggests the distinct possibility that the legendary monster of the mountains is itself extraterrestrial in origin. Douglas Bates, a Welsh man, was climbing the legendary mountain in early January 1973 when he had an amazing encounter. No, it was not with the beast of the Cairngorms. Rather,

Bates was confronted by a flying saucer that appeared as if out of nowhere and that hovered precariously close to him, wobbling as it did so. The craft, said Bates, was around fifty or sixty feet in diameter and was bright, shining silver in color. Bates suddenly found himself bathed in a blue glow. In seconds, his mind was filled with terrifying images of a worldwide nuclear holocaust. For around a minute and a half, the frightening pictures were unrelenting until they were suddenly replaced by a voice that directed Bates to "spread the word" that humankind needed to change its ways. If not, the images in Bates's head would become a reality. Literally overnight, Bates chose to radically change his life: he became a vegetarian, he devoted all of his free time to investigating the UFO phenomenon, and he divorced his wife, taking off for India. He has not been seen since.

BIGFOOT FROM THE STARS

Although the term "Bigfoot" was not coined until the late 1950s, it is a fact that reports of giant, hairy, humanoid creatures inhabiting the wilder, mountainous, and forested areas of the United States date back to the earliest years of Native American culture. Loren Coleman, one of the world's leading authorities on Bigfoot, says: "When Europeans colonized from the East to the West, their initial encounters were with the rare, eastern Bigfoot, which the natives they met spoke about. The first Americans acknowledged these hairy races, and their tales come down to us in the records that ethnographers, folklorists, and anthropologists have preserved in overlooked essays on hairy-giant legends and myths."

However, something is very intriguing about the Native

American beliefs in Bigfoot. They strongly suggest that the creatures are far more than they appear to be. That's to say, they do not just represent an undiscovered kind of North American ape but rather something directly linked to the UFO phenomenon. Given the fact that reports exist of Bigfoot from centuries ago, as astonishing as it may sound, Bigfoot, according to some eyewitnesses and investigators, may be nothing less than an ancient alien.

In 2014, the late Brad Steiger told me a most intriguing story: "A bizarre incident occurred in Turkey on the night of May 14, 1964. Ismir Bey and his wife were driving along a road that ran adjacent to a railroad track when they spotted a spinning disc in the sky, described by them as 'the size of a house.' Suddenly, it seemed to plummet out of the sky, and as the two watched it crashed to the ground in a burst of flames. This is certainly one of the few reports of a UFO crashing, and, to add a bizarre twist, a huge, hairy monster was soon seen by the Beys as it scrambled out of the wreckage and headed for safety—straight toward the Beys!

"In an effort to protect his wife from whatever fate might befall her at the hands of the monster, Bey flung himself at the beast, and was rewarded for his valor by being pounded into unconsciousness. Mrs. Bey reported that the monster then flung her husband in the direction of the railroad tracks and ran off into the nearby woods, but apparently it did not try to harm her."

Moving on….

The Native Languages website states: "The Bigfoot figure is common to the folklore of most Northwest Native American tribes. Native American Bigfoot legends usually describe the creatures as around 6–9 feet tall, very strong, hairy, uncivilized, and often foul-smelling, usually living in the woods and often foraging at night.… In some Native stories, Bigfoot may have minor supernatural

powers—the ability to turn invisible, for example—but they are always considered physical creatures of the forest, not spirits or ghosts.

"That is where the intertribal Bigfoot similarities end, however. In the Bigfoot myths of some tribes, Sasquatch and his relatives are generally shy and benign figures—they may take things that do not belong to them or even kidnap a human wife, but do not harm people and may even come to their aid. Sometimes Bigfoot is considered a guardian of nature in these tribes. These more benevolent Bigfeet usually appear alone or in a small family unit, and may exchange gifts or use sign language to communicate with Native American communities. But Bigfoot legends from other tribes describe them as malevolent creatures who attack humans, play dangerous tricks on them, or steal children; they may even eat people. These more dangerous Bigfoot monsters, known as Stick Indians or Bush Indians, are sometimes found in large groups or even villages, which engage in warfare with neighboring Indian tribes."

Stan Gordon is one of the United States' leading researchers of the stranger sides of the Bigfoot phenomenon, and they don't come much stranger than a case that Gordon investigated, in late 1973, in his home state of Pennsylvania. It's important to note that the case in question was one of dozens that Gordon received from 1972 to 1974, which, collectively, suggested the presence of unknown, hairy man-beasts all across Pennsylvania. Many of the cases that Gordon investigated, however, were dominated by phenomena that, for many Bigfoot investigators, fell far outside what one could call the norm—including a certain event that

occurred in Fayette County in October 1973.

It was on the dark night of October 25 when all hell broke loose in the heart of the county. The primary player in the story was one Steve Palmer, who was both amazed and frightened to see a brightly illuminated UFO hovering over local farmland around 9:00 P.M., but that wasn't all that Palmer encountered: a pair of immense, apelike animals with very long and muscular arms surfaced out of the shadows of the dark field and proceeded to walk right toward Palmer himself. He wasted no time and blasted them with a salvo of bullets. Very weirdly, the bullets appeared to have no effect—at all—on either creature, and they retreated into the darkness. The UFO did likewise, vanishing in an instant. That was not the end of the affair, however. Approximately 4 hours later, things took on even stranger, and far more terrifying, proportions.

It was roughly 1:00 A.M. when Stan Gordon arrived on the scene, having been alerted to the Palmer encounter by a local police officer, one who had been apprised of the facts. Along with Gordon were fellow investigators Dennis Smeltzer, Fred Pitt, David Smith, and George Lutz. They met with Palmer, who proceeded to tell them of his unearthly encounter with the two Bigfoot and the UFO. Then, quite out of the blue, something horrifying occurred: Palmer's breathing changed to the extent that he was literally panting heavily and deeply, and he broke into a deep, guttural growl and knocked both his own father and Lutz to the field floor. That was only the start of things.

The Sasquatch of Bigfoot has long been a legend in Native American communities before white settlers came to North America. Indigenous people tell stories of how these ape-like creatures attack and even eat people.

Pitt found himself unable to breathe properly, Smeltzer felt faint, and Palmer fell to the ground, having apparently passed out. A powerful, rotten odor of brimstone suddenly dominated the cold night air. The terrified group knew that it was vital that they get out of the field—and quickly, too—before things got even worse. Later, when Palmer regained consciousness, he told Gordon and his team that he, Palmer, while in his passed-out state, had seen before him a sickle-carrying, dark-robed figure who warned him that the human race was on the verge of destroying itself—and would do exactly that unless it curbed its violent instincts.

powerful, rotten odor of brimstone suddenly dominated

A the cold night air. The terrified group knew that it was vital that they get out of the field.…

Even stranger than that, a couple of weeks later, Palmer was visited at his home by two Air Force officers, one in uniform and the other in plainclothes. It became very clear, very quickly, that the pair knew all about Palmer's weird encounter and the later experience. They even confided in him that they knew that both UFOs and Sasquatch were genuine. The visit was for a specific reason: first, they showed Palmer a number of photos of Bigfoot creatures and wanted to know if the beast he encountered resembled them. Second, they asked if Palmer would be willing to be placed into a hypnotic state to ensure that the military secured all the relevant data. Palmer agreed. With all the information in hand, the two men got up, thanked Palmer, and left. Despite telling Palmer they would keep him informed of any future developments, they failed to do so. He never saw them again. It was a fitting end to a case steeped in mystery.

One of the most fascinating cases of relevancy came from James C. Wyatt of Memphis, Tennessee. He shared the story with the aforementioned paranormal expert Brad Steiger, giving him a copy of his—Wyatt's—grandfather's journal from 1888. It described the old man's exposure to the Bigfoot phenomenon way back in the nineteenth century. The location was the Humboldt Meridian in northwestern California. It was while in the area, on one particular day, that Wyatt's grandfather encountered a tribesman carrying a plate of raw meat. Puzzled, he asked what it

was for. After pondering on things for a while, the man motioned for Wyatt Sr. to follow him. On arriving at a cave built into a cliff face, he was shocked to see a huge, hair-covered, manlike beast. It was, however, quite docile and enthusiastically ate the meat provided for him.

It was then that Wyatt's grandfather got the full story. The beast—nicknamed "Crazy Bear"—had supposedly been brought to the forests "from the stars." Nothing less than a "small moon" had descended, ejecting both the creature and several others of its kind. The "moon" was reportedly piloted by very human-looking entities that always waved at the Indians as they dumped the hairy beasts on their land.

James C. Wyatt asked Brad Steiger: "Who is to say the Crazy Bears weren't exiled to our planet for some crime or other infraction of the laws of another planet?"

It is said that the beast called "Crazy Bear" was brought to the forest by a small moon descending from the stars.

On a very similar path, respected investigator Lon Strickler says: "Researcher and author Kewaunee Lapseritis maintains that the Bigfoot race was brought to Earth by the 'Star People,' long before human civilization even existed. His evidence is the creature's use of telepathic communications, alleged hundreds of joint Bigfoot–UFO sightings going back over a hundred years, and theoretical physics.

"He also stated that conventional Bigfoot investigators have not found the creature because they are limited in their belief that Bigfoot is 'simply a relic hominid that never became extinct.'

""That really may be true,' Lapseritis said in an interview. 'But

in addition to that, (Bigfoot) may literally be, as I've discovered, a paraphysical, interdimensional native people that have told me and other people telepathically that they were brought here millions of years ago by their friends, the Star People.'"

Strickler adds: "I recently received a telephone call from a woman in British Columbia who said she was the daughter of a Kootenai shaman. She stated that most Native tribes seem to believe Sasquatch is a nonphysical creature. Some tribal elders mention that they have seen the creature shapeshift into a wolf. She said her father thought that the creatures lived in another dimension from our physical plane, but can come here as it wishes."

Going back to the aforementioned Kewaunee (also known as Jack) Lapseritis, it's worth expanding on his views on the Bigfoot phenomenon. When the creatures were brought to our world by visiting extraterrestrials in times long past, says Lapseritis:

"Some were genetically 'modified' and released. Zechariah Sitchin practiced real science by correctly interpreting the Sumerian cuneiforms, which others in mainstream science could not understand. Sitchin opened the doors to reality for a lot of people. According to his work, all of us were genetically engineered. Some humans have the soul of an ET or Sasquatch/Ancient One. Contact with the right people is important to the Sasquatch. Some humans ('hairless ones') have the skills needed to put out the truth. The Sasquatch say we are living a lie, in an illusion created by our so-called 'modern' society. Our government and our religions are the true illusionists, perpetrating a diversion away from who we really are, in order to control the masses. More and more people are being contacted. We have all come here to learn critical lessons. I have come to understand, and to piece together all that they have told me and the other

contactees."

Any mention of the legendary and macabre Men in Black inevitably provokes imagery of an X-Files-type nature, imagery filled with tales of conspiracy and cover-up. It is a fact, however—and a decidedly strange fact, too—that the MIB don't just turn up in UFO-related events. They seem to have a deep fascination for strange creatures, too. In 1967, the Men in Black turned up in Point Pleasant, West Virginia, when sightings of the famous, red-eyed, winged Mothman were at their height. Then, in the early 1970s, a lake monster researcher named Ted Holiday had an encounter of the MIB variety on the shores of Loch Ness. All of which brings us to the MIB–Bigfoot connection.

A particularly strange story that falls perfectly into this category reached my attention in mid-March 2007 and occurred only a week or so earlier. It came from a married couple, Donnie and Lynne, who lived on the outskirts of Oklahoma City. It all began, I was told, in the heart of the Ouachita National Forest, Oklahoma. Certainly, it's a forest that could easily hide far more than a few Bigfoot.

The Forest Service says: "The Ouachita National Forest covers 1.8 million acres in central Arkansas and southeastern Oklahoma. Headquartered in Hot Springs, Arkansas, the forest is managed for multiple uses, including timber and wood production, watershed protection and improvement, habitat for wildlife and fish species (including threatened and endangered ones), wilderness area management, minerals leasing, and outdoor recreation. Enjoy camping, hiking, biking, scenic driving, trail riding, water recreation, fishing, hunting, and more!"

Donnie and Lynne intended on doing at least several of those things. Instead, however, they encountered the United States' most famous monster. It was around dusk, and husband and wife were strolling along the winding paths of the tree-shrouded Ouachita National Recreation Trail when Donnie was suddenly gripped by an overwhelming sense that they were not alone, that their every move was being watched and scrutinized by animalistic eyes. Donnie's sixth sense—one that we have all displayed from time to time—was right on target.

The expansive Ouachita National Forest in Oklahoma and Arkansas covers nearly two million acres of land, providing a lot of room in which a Bigfoot may wander.

In seconds, a massive, hair-covered figure emerged from the trees at a distance of what was barely twenty feet or so—and when I say "massive," the couple was talking of something that stood between eight and a half and nine feet tall: a genuine giant. Neither Donnie nor Lynne had any prior interest in the Big-foot mystery,

but they instantly knew what they were looking at: the legendary Sasquatch. They told me that the creature was male; its anatomy made that much clear. Somewhat embarrassed, Lynne said that its "manhood" was visible but tiny. They did not know it, but gorillas, for example, are noted for being far less than well endowed. In that sense, their words on this aspect of the Bigfoot's appearance actually helped bolster their story. In addition, the creature had a conical head, a huge chest, and thick legs.

Perhaps not surprisingly, seeing the thing at close quarters caused Lynne to fall to the ground, her legs giving way beneath her. Donnie could only stare with a mixture of awe, fear, and dread. For a moment, the Bigfoot merely stared at them, then something totally unforeseen occurred: Bigfoot spoke to the shocked couple, not literally but in a fashion that they could only describe as telepathy.

It was as if, Donnie suggested to me, that the creature understood perfectly what a camera was and what it could do….

Both Donnie and Lynne heard the following words fill their heads in a soothing, soft, female voice: "Do not be afraid. You will not be harmed. Do not come close." Hardly surprisingly, the pair did exactly what they were told to do. For a few moments, at least. Donnie decided after 20 seconds or so that this was a once-in-a-lifetime chance to capture evidence of the creatures that science and zoology tell us do not exist. He slowly reached into his backpack and pulled out his digital camera.

In a second, the voice filled his head again, although not that

of Lynne's, interestingly: "Do not." It was as if, Donnie suggested to me, that the creature understood perfectly what a camera was and what it could do, and, therefore, instantly took steps to prevent the pair from securing evidence of the beast's existence. The creature then strode toward them as they dropped to their knees and the couple clung to each other tightly.

Fortunately, no violent attack occurred on them. Instead, the Bigfoot leaned in close and, yet again, they heard a female voice say: "You will not be hurt and you need not fear. Go. One more time I will see you." They didn't need telling again and managed to scramble to their shaking legs and backed away, finally breaking into a hysterical run, looking back until the creature could no longer be seen. The weirdness, however, was far from over.

Over the course of the next few nights, both Donnie and Lynne had vivid, traumatic dreams of several silver-eyed Bigfoot looming over their bed, warning them never to talk of what they had encountered in the Ouachita National Forest. Notably, on the final night of the nightmarish dreams, Donnie woke up with a sudden jolt as the dream reached its peak and actually saw the creatures in the bedroom—which suddenly dematerialized before his eyes. This led the couple to think that the dreams were not normal dreams based around a recent, traumatic event. They came to believe that Bigfoot can materialize, dematerialize, and even penetrate our dream states.

The pair did not see the creatures again—either physically or in their dreams—but still more was to come. On the next night, both were woken from their slumber in the early hours by a thin beam of light that arced across the darkened bedroom. It was coming through the gap in the curtains of the open window. Donnie raced to the window and caught sight of two things: a number of strange, small balls of light that flitted around the

woods that surrounded their home and—illuminated by a bright moon and motion-detector lights—a man dressed in a dark suit and trench coat and wearing an old, 1950s-style fedora hat, which is the typical costume of the Men in Black. Realizing that he had been seen, the MIB retreated into the woods in the same direction as the eerie globes of light.

A couple more weird things occurred, including several days of static on the couple's landline—another classic aspect of MIB encounters—and strange howling coming from the woods. Then, nothing. Despite having told me of the events—when the creatures had firmly told them never to speak of them—no harm came to Donnie or Lynne. Unfortunately, no solid answers were uncovered for them, either.

BLACK-EYED CHILDREN

David Weatherly is an expert on the phenomenon of what have become known as the black-eyed children, someone who has prepared the following paper on this particularly sinister topic. Their title, as you may have already guessed, comes from the fact that these creepy, pale-faced children have eyes that are completely black and eerily like the eyes of the so-called "Grey" aliens of UFO lore. It is the issue of the black eyes that has led researchers of the UFO subject and the world of the paranormal to suspect that the black-eyed children are aliens themselves—or possibly even alien–human hybrids. With that said, over to David Weatherly, who very generously provided me with the following:

“Imagine, it’s dusk and you’ve just begun to settle in for the evening. Your solitude is interrupted when there’s a knock at your door. It’s a long, continuous rapping, almost maddening in its insistence. Answering the door, you find a young child of about ten years old. He stands quietly in a hooded top and jeans, staring at his shoes. What you see of his face is very pale and for some reason you can’t put your finger on, he makes you nervous.

“In a cold, monotone voice, he requests that you ‘invite him in.’

“You look around, wondering where his parents are. You ask if he’s lost, or needs help, to which he responds: “Just let me in, this won’t take long.” “You start to back away but for some reason, you’re conflicted. You feel stuck between running and simply opening the door and asking him to step inside. It is, after all, only a child isn’t it? That’s when he looks up and makes eye contact with you, revealing large solid black eyes that are unlike anything humanly possible. Your unease gives way to outright fear.

“Your flight response kicks in and you dash inside, slamming the door and bolting it as quickly as possible. You’re shaking from fear and you say a silent prayer that the “boy” will just go away.

“You’ve just encountered a black-eyed kid, now commonly known as a ‘BEK.’

“What exactly are these strange beings? And what is their bizarre connection to the infamous Men in Black?”

The modern wave of BEK encounters began in the 1990s, when Texas journalist Brian Bethel ran into a pair of the kids one evening. He posted his personal account on the Internet, and the

response was overwhelming to say the least.

Bethel had driven to a local shopping center one evening to drop off a payment at an after-hours mail drop. While sitting in his car writing a check, he was approached by a pair of boys, who tried to coax him into offering them a ride. Their mannerisms were strange, and Bethel felt that something was amiss as they recounted their story. In fact, he was so nervous that he only rolled his window down slightly, just enough to hear the boys clearly. The two boys claimed to be interested in seeing a movie but had "left their money at home" and needed Bethel to give them a ride to retrieve it. Bethel was sharp enough to notice that the last showing of the movie was more than half over. Something, he knew, was amiss.

Bethel continued to feel nervous as he spoke to the kids. Since he was clearly not responsive to the boys, they pressed him further.

"C'mon mister, now, we just want to go to our house and we're just two little boys."

It was another odd statement, and at this point, Bethel made eye contact with the boys. He was shocked to see that they both had solid black eyes.

The creepy black-eyed child (or kid) could be an alien or, possibly, a human–alien hybrid.

"They were coal black—no pupil, no iris—just two staring orbs reflecting the red and white light of the marquee," Bethel recalls.

It was the final straw. Bethel's nervous tension gave way to his flight response, and he raced out of the parking lot, leaving the boys behind. He stole a quick look back as he was pulling away and saw that the two disturbing kids were nowhere to be seen.

Brian Bethel was left with a deep sense of fear and dread. He was also quite confused. Although they appeared to be normal boys, the encounter with the pair had made him experience a range of odd feelings, and he couldn't shake the experience. He posted the account on the Internet and was surprised at the response. The story struck a chord with readers, and people began to list their own encounters with weird, black-eyed beings. Was this the birth

of a new urban legend or just the latest manifestation of something much, much older?

Although I had read the early stories, it wasn't until I met a gentleman who had experienced the black-eyed children himself that I turned a serious eye toward investigating the phenomenon. As I interviewed more witnesses and dug more deeply, I was struck by the fact that the BEKs shared traits with many different types of paranormal phenomena. Arguments could be made that they were alien hybrids, demons, ghosts, or a host of other beings. One of the most intriguing connections that arose, however, were the similarities between the BEKs and the strange Men in Black, or MIB.

On the surface, few connections between the UFO-connected MIB and creepy little kids with black eyes showing up on doorsteps may seem to exist, but when we delve into the actual accounts, we find numerous similarities.

Consider the appearance of both beings. The BEKs are usually described as having pale or pasty skin. Some witnesses report that the skin looks "artificial." Still other accounts claim that the children have olive-toned skin, which implies that they are of Mediterranean origin. Both of these descriptions are heard in classic MIB encounters. Oddly, no one who has ever encountered the BEKs report a blemish of any kind. Bear in mind, these are children usually in their preteen years. One would expect acne, pimples, freckles, something, but it's never the case.

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Next is the manner of speech. The black-eyed children are reported to speak in a very monotone manner. Their use of language is often awkward and unusual. They will use phrases that simply aren't natural, such as "Is it food time?" Perhaps even more troubling, many people who encounter the BEKs believe that the children are attempting to exert some type of mind control through the use of repeated phrases and their cold, monotone speech patterns. Typical MIB encounters certainly contain elements of attempted coercion by the strange gentlemen, as witnesses to UFO sightings are encouraged to ignore what they saw. Are the attempts by the children another form of this same control dynamic?

Not only are the BEKs awkward in their communication efforts, they also appear unfamiliar with common objects that most of us use on a daily basis.

Take the case of Susan, for instance. She encountered the BEKs at her home in the Orlando, Florida, area. Susan was hard at work finishing a project when the knocking started.

"I'll be honest," she says. "I was in a very bad mood. The day had been very frustrating and I hadn't really gotten much done. I was focused on my project when the knocking started. I was trying to finish something, just one little piece, and thought that the person at the door would just wait for a moment. The knocking didn't stop though, not even a break, it was long and constant. I got very angry about it for some reason. I dropped what I was doing and went to the door."

Susan reports that she flung the door open very quickly

because of her anger. She barely noticed the two kids standing on her porch as she took a step out and pointed at her doorbell button.

“Why don’t you use the damn doorbell?” she shouted. The response she received was very odd, to say the least. The two children turned their heads and looked at the lit doorbell button, then slowly turned and looked back at Susan.

“They repeated this motion several times. It was as if they had no idea what that button was for or what I meant by my question. I honestly don’t think they knew what a doorbell was.

The BEKs are described as being pale and having perfect, unblemished skin. They speak in a weird, unnatural way. Encountering one always gives one an uncomfortable sense that there is something definitely not right with these children.

"I suddenly felt very uncomfortable. It was a creepy response and I took a step back so that I was in my doorway."

After an uncomfortable pause, one of the kids turned back to Susan and requested that she ask them in.

"He kept saying that I should invite them in because it was hot outside. I'd never seen these kids before in my life and I certainly wasn't going to let them in my house. What's weird is that at the time, it almost made sense to me and I actually thought about opening the door and letting them come inside. I just felt completely confused. I kept thinking about the doorbell though and why they acted like they didn't know what it was. The kid who was speaking finally looked up and stared directly at me. That's when I saw the eyes, solid black. Frankly it scared me like nothing ever had. I ran inside and slammed the door, locking the deadbolt."

The weird reaction of the children to the doorbell harkens back to MIB encounters where the Men in Black exhibit confusion when presented with forks or cups of jello. If these were normal humans, why would they have such trouble with common objects? Adding to the strangeness, no one has ever reported a BEK with an iPod or cell phone. That in itself is most unusual for the modern age. How many children could one spot on a daily basis who aren't texting or plugged in to music? With the common use of small, handheld devices, the answer is very few.

Evan in Illinois encountered a BEK who wanted a ride to some vague location. He handed the boy his cell phone and told

him that he could call his parents if he needed a ride. The puzzled boy turned the phone over and over in his hands as if he'd never seen such a device before and had no idea what to do with it. Evan addressed the boy: "Don't you know your mom's number?" After a pause, the boy replied: "Six." The boy looked up when he answered, revealing solid black eyes. Stunned, Evan quickly drove away, leaving the boy and the cell phone behind. He reported the phone stolen, but it never turned up.

While the black-eyed kid in Evan's encounter seemed unable to do anything with a cell phone, it hasn't stopped his cohorts from causing trouble with electronic devices.…

While the black-eyed kid in Evan's encounter seemed unable to do anything with a cell phone, it hasn't stopped his cohorts from causing trouble with electronic devices on other occasions. Indeed, like the MIB, the BEKs have entered the realm of electronic interference.

While I received a few minor reports of such things when doing research, it was only after the publication of my book The Black-eyed Children that things got really interesting.

The first indications came in the aftermath of the book's release. Appearing on various radio shows and podcasts to discuss the topic, some odd things began to occur. I found that I could talk about a wide range of paranormal topics, but when the discussion turned to the black-eyed children, things changed. Electronic issues would suddenly plague the program. Strange sounds and static would interrupt the show. Calls would be dropped, and weird,

clicking noises would come from nowhere.

Appearing on Dreamland with Whitley Strieber, technical issues started right from the beginning. Twice, we were disconnected after strange sounds on the line. This could be easily dismissed, but the problems didn't end there. The volume levels of the show were all over the place as Whitley recorded. "I've never seen this happen before," Whitley reported as he attempted to correct the issues in his studio. I'll note here that Whitley and I discussed both the MIB and the BEKs. In fact, on this particular show, Whitley revealed for the first time that he himself had encountered a black-eyed child.

Weird electronic events were not restricted to interviews, though. Strange as it sounds, I began to receive some accounts of people experiencing such events while they were researching the BEKs themselves.

The first email came from a reader named Jane. She writes in part: "Every time I start reading your book, The Black-eyed Children, electronics in my house go wonky. The first night the smoke alarm went off even though there was no smoke. The second evening the timer on my stove went crazy. I never set it and never use it so that was weird; I didn't even know what it was at first. Then another time my garage door opened itself! That one really freaked me out! Are other people having such weird things happen or is this some strange coincidence? I'm interested in the topic but I honestly don't want any black-eyed kids showing up at my door!"

Indeed, Jane was not alone in her experience. About a dozen readers reported similar incidents and sent me questions or comments similar to the above. It's a small number by comparison, but still notable.

Psychic Kimberly Rackley had a similar experience: “Since I ordered your book I have been having issues with computer, Internet and modem. Last night while listening to GDC … the show suddenly stopped. No tech difficulties could be found to solve … they are blaming server, the host was baffled at the problem and guess what? Your book was sitting right next to my computer of which I read most of the day and had notes of my impressions laying on top of book.”

Jane and Kimberly certainly weren’t alone, and the incidents weren’t always instigated by simply reading the book. Other people reported their attempts to research the black-eyed children on the Internet and having strange results.

Shannon in Illinois reports: “For some reason, out of the blue, I suddenly found myself compelled by stories of black-eyed kids. A friend told me an encounter that was supposed to have happened on a Marine base in North Carolina. Even after a few days, I couldn’t get the story out of my mind so I decided to do some research. My husband and son had gone to bed; it was about ten o’clock and I wasn’t tired. I started looking up information on the Internet about the BEKs. Just as I was reading the Brian Bethel story, all the power went out. It came back on after a few minutes and I restarted my computer. I looked outside and wondered what had happened since the skies were clear. I went right back to my research and again, right in the middle of reading through a website about the BEKs, the power went off. I went through the whole cycle again. The third time when I had started the computer and got to reading, the power flickered and the light bulb in my desk lamp exploded. It scared me so much; I jumped up and went to get in bed with my husband. The next day, I was home alone and decided to try again. Appliances in my house started to malfunction. The microwave started beeping and nothing was in it.

I finally had to unplug it. When I did, I still heard a beeping noise and realized that my alarm clock was going off too, so I also had to unplug it to get it to stop. Once again, the computer went down as soon as I was on a website reading black-eyed kid information. This time though, I was on my husband's computer so I knew it wasn't an issue with my computer. Since then, every time I start to research the black-eyed kids, strange things like this happen. Part of me wants to leave it alone, but honestly, I can't seem to help myself. I've decided though that I'll do the rest of my research at the local library. I guess I feel like maybe there's safety in numbers."

Incidents with BEKs are sometimes accompanied by mysterious power outages, especially of electronic devices, a phenomenon that is also associated with UFO encounters.

Over time, several of those who experienced electronic issues while researching the BEKs began to recover memories of their own encounters with the odd children. "It all seems rather surreal,"

Jane later told me. “I did some therapy to recover my repressed memories and there were those kids, buried in my past. I guess somehow, reading about them triggered a release of the memory and it turns out that I had my own encounter with them. I’m happy that I’m still around but I think I’ll leave the subject alone; I couldn’t bear for those things to return.”

Had Jane herself caused the electrical malfunctions in her home, or was some other outside force involved? Are the MIB and the BEKs related in some way? The more we delve into the effects on electronic items, the more possible such connections appear. Perhaps the BEKs and the MIB simply operate on the same frequency; hence, the effects on witnesses is similar.

On a personal level, these weird, electronic-related events reached a crescendo in the spring of 2012. It started, simply enough, with a phone call.

Sitting in my office one afternoon, my cell phone lit up. Since the number was programmed in, I knew who was calling. It was a friend and fellow investigator of the paranormal, Jeff Waldridge. Answering the phone, I was not greeted with Jeff ’s voice, however—merely static was on the line. No problem, I thought, he had probably pocket-dialed my number. Had it happened once or even a couple of times, I would have dismissed it, but this became a constant occurrence over the next several days. I knew it wasn’t an issue with the phone since all other calls I received were static free. Since I was extremely busy at the time, I didn’t address the frequent calls right away, expecting them to stop. They didn’t. The phone would ring when I was nowhere around, resulting in long messages left on my voice mail filled with static and garbled

sounds. Listening to one of the messages one morning, I heard a child's voice. Here was the answer, I thought: Jeff 's child had been playing with his phone and hitting the call button on my number. I sent him a text letting him know that his child had been playing with his phone and calling me repeatedly. He was a bit puzzled but checked his call log, saw the calls, and apologized with a promise that it wouldn't happen again. Of course, it did. In fact, the calls seemed to increase and come at even more random hours. The phone would ring in the middle of the night, or sometimes, it would ring when I stepped away from my desk for just a moment, leaving nothing but a missed log and another message of static. I emailed Jeff, but he simply couldn't explain what was happening.

One particular night, just after one of these calls, I received an email from Jeff. He recounted to me that he was lying on his bed reading The Black Eyed Children. Suddenly, his phone lit up.

"I was reading The Black Eyed Children book. The phone was laying about six inches from me and it started dialing you. It was the craziest thing I've seen."

Jeff was puzzled by the phone not just activating itself but dialing my number without anyone touching it. Following up on all possibilities, he took the cell phone to his provider and explained the mystery. They, too, were mystified that the phone appeared to act on its own accord and that it only dialed one number—mine. Phone technicians could not explain the situation. Nothing in the phone was broken, so no repairs were done. The calls continued. Whoever or whatever was playing games still had a point to make.

Like me, Jeff has a wide range of interest in the paranormal, UFOs, cryptids, and conspiracy theories. He investigates sites on a regular basis and takes trips when he has the time. Neither of us was sure exactly what the calls meant, and certainly, no pattern

existed that either of us could detect.

The finale was about to come, and it was quite a statement. Jeff went on a road trip. Naturally, he carried his cell phone with him. It was during this trip that the last call came in. His phone was sitting on the dash of the car and lit up, dialing my number when Jeff drove into Point Pleasant, West Virginia.

No doubt, most readers will recognize the town as the home of that flying, red-eyed entity known as Mothman. Point Pleasant had its share of MIB sightings during the height of Mothman's activity. Legendary investigator of the strange John Keel was actually threatened by a trio of MIB who told him to leave both Mothman and UFOs alone.

His phone was sitting on the dash of the car and lit up, dialing my number when Jeff drove into Point Pleasant, West Virginia.

Whatever was manipulating the cell phone could not have picked a better place from which to make a final statement. Such high strangeness only added to the mystery. Questions remained. Who, or what, was causing the calls and frequent electronic interference? Was it the MIB, the BEKs, or both? Not only that, but what exactly was the point they were trying to make? The rabbit hole, it seemed, became deeper all the time.

It is interesting to note that, while many people considered Mothman to be an omen of impending disaster, the BEKs are at times cast in the same light. Numerous people who have encountered the creepy children believe they were an omen of ill

fortune. Some report that after seeing the kids, they experienced misfortunes, losses, and, at times, even deaths in their families. Like Mothman, some debate as to whether the black-eyed children bring disaster or simply appear in advance of impending ill fortune.

BEKs, MIB, and, of course, UFOs—do they all fit together somehow? I'm frequently asked whether encounters with the BEKs have any correlation to UFO sightings. One would almost expect this, given the strange nature of the encounters, the weird similarities between the Men in Black and the black-eyed children, and the general strangeness surrounding UFOs. Oddly though, so far, few connections exist between accounts of UFO sightings and appearances of the BEKs. In fact, it seems as though the BEKs may actually avoid these locations during times of high UFO activity. It's almost contrary to MIB accounts when the gentlemen show up directly after UFO sightings to harass the witnesses. Given the high number of UFO reports in recent years, one would expect that a certain percentage of black-eyed child encounters would occur at the same time, but it doesn't seem to be the case. Furthermore, a portion of those people who report BEK encounters (around 10–15 percent) are also abductees. Many of these people report frequent sightings of UFOs, yet their BEK encounters happen on separate occasions.

Are BEKs related to UFO activity, which would then also be related to MIBs? According to several encounters, there does seem to be a correlation.

John Keel's encounter with the MIB in his home was shared with Nick Redfern by author Brad Steiger. Steiger reported that Keel "began to tell me of the visitations he'd had with three men who had not knocked, but had entered, his apartment. They literally came through the door." Others who have encountered the MIB have reported the same sudden invasion of their homes by the weird figures. The MIB, it seems, do not need to be invited inside. Oddly, this is the opposite of typical BEK encounters. When the black-eyed children show up, they spend most of their time trying to convince their victim to "invite them in."

Still, odd connections remain between the MIB and the BEKs. Encounters with both beings are tense and nerve-wracking. Many who have encountered the black-eyed children believe that they have experienced something very sinister.

"I felt like I was being eyed up and down by a predator," reports John.

“I served in the military and I was in combat. I know what it feels like to have something that wants to harm you staring at you. It’s a bad feeling in the gut and the hair on the back of your neck stands up. That’s what I felt that night and it’s a damned odd thing that I’ll never understand. They looked like kids except for those black eyes.”

John echoes the feelings that many other witnesses express. Regardless of their childlike appearance, it’s clear that the BEKs are far from normal children. Are they connected to the notorious MIB? Perhaps they are the latest version of some otherworldly or other-dimensional creatures that use our reality as a playground or, worse, a laboratory.

“I’m convinced they’re connected to UFOs somehow,” John states. “Let me tell you, I never believed in UFOs at all until I saw those kids. I mean, they couldn’t possibly be from here. That’s why I think they’re something extraterrestrial. They come down here and pretend to be kids but it comes off creepy, they don’t have it right yet.”

Looking over the cases of BEK encounters gives one the sense that a grand experiment is taking place. Accounts follow similar patterns, yet constant, slight variations exist. Is some master manipulator tweaking the system behind the scenes?

Some researchers place the Men in Black in a broader context of the mysterious. Folklorist Thomas E. Bullard writes: “Almost a sense of familiarity attaches to the Men in Black. They step into the shoes vacated by angels and demons to serve as modernized versions of other-worldly messengers, modified to reflect extraterrestrial rather than supernatural employment but clearly functionaries in the same mold.”

Still, odd connections remain between the MIB and the BEKs. Encounters with both beings are tense and nerve-wracking.

This description could easily fit encounters with the black-eyed children. Such viewpoints offer an interesting perspective. Mysterious figures in black have shown up through history. In early times, they were associated with religious or occult movements. Later, the MIB showed up when UFO sightings and contactees became the buzz words of the day. Perhaps, the sudden increase in black-eyed-kid encounters is the modern expression of this unknown force.

BEKs, MIB, UFOs—somehow, perhaps they do all fit together in some fortean mosaic of the weird.

Whatever they are, the black-eyed children don't appear to be going anywhere, and they are leaving as many questions in their wake as the MIB before them. Whether or not the two are connected, it looks like we're in for more bizarre manifestations ahead, so pay attention. The next time a knock comes at your door, it's impossible to tell what kind of strange figure is calling.

CATS FROM OTHER WORLDS

For decades, the United Kingdom has played host to a decidedly mysterious and marauding beast. It has become known as the "Alien Big Cat" (ABC). Some cryptozoolgists and monster hunters suggest that the puzzle is an even older one, maybe even dating back centuries. Regardless of when, exactly, the controversy began, the fact is that pretty much every year, dozens upon dozens of reports surface of large cats roaming the wilder—and sometimes the not so wild—parts of Britain. Very often, the cats are described as being huge, muscular, and black in color. This has given rise to the term "black panther," which is technically incorrect but frequently used by both the public and the press. It would be far more correct to suggest that the creatures are probably leopards and jaguars displaying significant melanism, a

condition in which the animals have an excess of a black pigment, known as melanin. For some, the ABCs are extraterrestrial creatures.

As for how such strange animals have come to be seen across pretty much the entirety of the British Isles, the theories are as many as they are varied. Some researchers hold that the animals have escaped from private zoos and enclosures and are now living and thriving very nicely in the nation's woods and forests. Others suggest that back in 1976, when the British government significantly altered the rules and regulations governing the keeping of large, predatory animals, the owners of such cats—who couldn't afford to pay the new fees—secretly released their pets into the wild. Today, so the theory continues, what people are seeing are the descendants of those large cats set free in the 1970s.

Other theories are far more controversial: one suggests that the ABCs may have been with us since roughly 43 C.E., when invading Roman forces brought large cats to Britain in the form of mascots. Did some of those mascots escape and manage to survive and breed largely undetected? Some say yes. Then is the highly charged theory that Britain has in its midst an unidentified indigenous cat—one that science and zoology have yet to recognize or categorize.

One theory about Alien Big Cats is that they are exotic pets that were brought to the United Kingdom and that either escaped their owners or were deliberately released.

Whatever the answer to the question of the origins of Britain's ABCs, the fact is that their presence is pretty much accepted by the general public and the media—although largely not by the government, which prefers to play down the matter whenever and wherever possible, but they are not literal monsters; they're simply regular animals, albeit seen in distinctly out-of-place environments, correct? Well … maybe not. They just might be monsters, after all. Extraterrestrial monsters.

Although many ABC researchers cringe and squirm when the matter is brought up, the fact is that more than a few reports on record place the ABCs in a category that is less flesh-and-blood-based and far more paranormally themed, perhaps even in the extraterrestrial realm. Cases exist of the ABCs vanishing—literally—before the eyes of astonished witnesses. People report large,

black cat encounters in old grave-yards, within ancient stone circles, and even—on a few occasions—in association with UFO sightings. Whatever the truth of the matter, the ABCs of the United Kingdom aren't going away anytime soon.

Throughout history, folklore, and mythology, one can find accounts of shapeshifting creatures, the most famous example surely being the werewolf. The deadly monster of the full moon is far from being alone, however. In Africa, legends exist of werehyenas. Wererats have been reported in Oregon. Cynanthropy is a condition in which a person believes that they can shapeshift into the form of a dog. Then there are werecats.

Tales of werecats exist in numerous locations: South America, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Sometimes, the werecats are nothing less than transformed humans. Leopards, lions, tigers, and jaguars are typically the werecat forms into which a human shapeshifter mutates. Others are regular cats altered by dark magic into something hostile and terrible. All of which brings us back to the werecats of Britain.

The earliest case I have on file dates from 1953, specifically in the month of August. The location: Abbots Bromley, a village in the English county of Staffordshire, England, the origins of which date back to at least 942 C.E. The witness was a now-deceased man, Brian Bakewell. In 2002, Bakewell's family told me of how he often spoke of the occasion when, as he walked through Abbots Bromley on what was a warm summer's night, he was confronted by a large, black cat—one that he described as the typical "black panther."

Not surprisingly, Bakewell was frozen in his tracks. His amazement turned to outright fear when the beast suddenly rose up onto its back limbs, giving it a height of around five and a half feet (1.7 meters). The creature reportedly issued a low growl and

flicked its dangling front paws in Bakewell's direction. Notably, Bakewell's daughter told me her father said that as the ABC rose up, "its back legs changed shape, probably to support it when it was standing upright." A few seconds later, the creature dropped back to the ground and bounded out of sight.

A similar report, this one from the centuries-old village of Blakeney—in the English county of Norfolk—occurred in 1967. In this case, the witness, who was driving to Blakeney on a cold winter's night, caught a brief glimpse of a creature standing at the side of the road that was eerily similar to the one seen by Brian Bakewell fourteen years previous. In this case, the woman said: "It stood like a person, but stooped, but had a cat's head. Even the pointed ears."

The creature reportedly issued a low growl and flicked its dangling front paws in Bakewell's direction.

The final two cases in my files are separated by seven years—1981 and 1988—but the location was the same: the German War Cemetery located within the heavily wooded Cannock Chase, Staffordshire. The Chase has long been a hotbed for weirdness: Bigfoot-type creatures, werewolves, huge serpents, ghosts, UFOs, and much more of a supernatural nature have been reported in the depths of the Chase.

As for the two reports of werecat-type creatures seen at the cemetery, one was a daytime event involving a beast that was black in color, taller than the average man, and seen leaning on one of the gravestones until it realized it was being watched, and it dropped to all fours and raced off into the trees. The second case

concerned a van driver crossing the Chase late at night, who was forced to bring his vehicle to a halt—very near the cemetery—as a result of the presence in the road of a huge, black cat. It was a cat that stared intently at the shocked driver until it "sort of jumped onto its back legs." According to the man, Don Allen, the creature remained in view for no more than about twenty seconds, after which it headed toward the cemetery, making a curious "hopping and bouncing" movement as it did so.

Are infernal werecats really roaming the British Isles? Granted, the number of reports is small, yet, the witnesses—and, in the case of Brian Bakewell, his family—are adamant that what they encountered were large, black, upright cats that displayed vaguely human characteristics. Perhaps the old myths and legends are not just folklore, after all. Just maybe, the monstrous werecat really does roam the old landscapes of the British Isles.

A subject that for years typically only attracted the attention of cryptozoologists and monster hunters, the ABC phenomenon was thrust into the limelight in late 2008 when the Australian government decided to make its thoughts and data on the subject known publicly. It was in September of that year when Nathan Rees, the premier of New South Wales, Australia, declared openly and to the media that the stories of the ABCs roaming the land were not the stuff of hoaxes, misidentification, or fantasy. The creatures really existed—even if no one knew exactly what they were.

Notably, this statement was completely at odds with comments Rees made in August 2008, when he essentially stated that the subject had no merit whatsoever. What changed his opinion,

however, was a large dossier of ABC sightings in Australia—collected by elements of the Australian government—that was provided to him in early September and which made for impressive reading. It was as a result of Rees's words that Australian officials decided that rather than just collect such reports and file them away, they would finally embark on an investigation of those same reports. The program, which focused on the State of Victoria—a particular hotspot for Alien Big Cat encounters—began in earnest in 2010 at the order of the Victorian National Party's Peter Ryan.

Two years later, specifically on September 18, 2012, the long-awaited report was finally published. It was not the kind of thing that many people—particularly farmers who claimed to have lost substantial numbers of animals to the ABCs—were anticipating and/or hoping for. The report—titled Assessment of Evidence for the Presence in Victoria of a Wild Population of "Big Cats"—concluded that no such creatures were prowling around, never mind slaughtering the nation's farm animals.

When ABCs started making news in Australia in 2008, New South Wales premier Nathan Rees asserted that the stories of huge predatory felines were not a hoax.

Minister for Agriculture and Food Security Peter Walsh tried to assure the skeptical populace as well as the doubtful media that no Alien Big Cat had ever been "detected in a formal wildlife survey, shot by a hunter or farmer or killed by a vehicle and no skeletal remains have ever been found. Nor have 'big cats' been identified in wildlife studies involving the analysis of thousands of mammalian fecal samples."

So, what, then, were people seeing? According to Australian authorities, they were nothing stranger than overfed, regular cats that had turned feral. Many people who followed the story suggested and suspected that the government was playing the

matter down to avoid panicking the population by admitting that large and dangerous cats were on the loose. Despite extensive criticisms of the report, the Australian government was utterly unmoved: "On the basis of the report's conclusions, further work focusing on obtaining primary evidence to conclusively rule out the existence of 'big cats' is not warranted."

That is where matters still stand today—somewhat frustratingly. Ranchers and members of the Australian public continue to see Alien Big Cats on a disturbingly regular basis not just in Victoria but all across Australia. Can so many people all be mistaken by nothing stranger than tubby, feral cats? Australian authorities say yes! The eyewitnesses, however—hardly surprisingly—hold very different views. Unless something unforeseen occurs out of the blue—such as the killing or capturing of an ABC in Australia—it's unlikely that the situation will change.

Now we come to the UFO angle to all of this. As amazing as it might seem, a direct connection exists between the ABCs and the extraterrestrial Men in Black. During the early part of 1998, the British government's House of Commons held a fascinating and arguably near-unique debate on the existence—or otherwise—of a particular breed of mystery animal that is widely rumored, and even accepted by many, to inhabit the confines of the British Isles: the so-called Alien Big Cats, or ABCs, as they have become infamously known. It scarcely needs mentioning that Britain is not home to an indigenous species of large cat. Nevertheless, for decades, amazing stories have circulated from all across the nation of sightings of large, predatory cats that savagely feed on both livestock and wild animals and that terrify, intrigue, and amaze the

local populace in the process. Of course, the media loves them, one and all.

As history has demonstrated, a very large and credible body of data now exists in support of the notion that the British Isles do have within their midst a healthy and thriving population of presently unidentified large cats, such as the infamous Beast of Bodmin Moor and the Beast of Exmoor that so hysterically dominated the nation's newspapers back in the early to mid 1980s. But never mind just the 1980s—reports continue to thrive to this very day.

However, one aspect of the ABC mystery doesn't always get the coverage it should: the strange connection to the mysterious Men in Black and "government officials" that, allegedly, at least, are intent on keeping any and all hard evidence of the existence of the beasts under wraps and out of the hands of the public and the media. It might seem strange that a cover-up of the ABC phenomenon could exist in the United Kingdom when the media is reporting on them—somewhere in the land—at least a couple of times per week.

However, a vast chasm exists between (a) the press titillating and exciting their readers with tales of large, predatory cats on the loose and (b) actually presenting hard evidence of such creatures in the nation's midst. The stories of the big cats of the United Kingdom undeniably entertain and intrigue the British public. That, however, is very different from—hypothetically—someone finding a dead mountain lion by the side of the road and the story then becoming a stark and serious one of potential man-eating proportions.

Clearly, we don't see evidence of sinister, black-garbed characters popping up and silencing witnesses every time an ABC is seen in the United Kingdom, but they have surfaced on more

than a few occasions when claims are made about ABC corpses being found or seen (by the side of a country road, for instance). Merrily Harpur's book Mystery Big Cats includes a number of cases that suggest that the British government's DEFRA—the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs—may have played a role in confiscating the evidence that large, unknown cats really are prowling around the British landscape.

Bucolic Bodmin Moor in Cornwall, England, is the territory of a frightening feline beast according to tales published in newspapers during the 1980s.

Then there's the story of Maureen Abbott. She saw, when she was in her twenties, what she describes as a large "black panther" late one winter evening in either 1954 or 1955. Astonishingly, it was doing nothing less than racing along the track as she stood, alone, awaiting a train on the Bakerloo Line of the London

Underground rail system. Describing the animal as running very fast, she said that as it passed her, it quickly looked in her direction, with a menace-filled frown on its visage, before vanishing into the darkness of the tunnels. Although Abbott did not see the creature again, she has never forgotten her brief, terrifying encounter with the unknown, deep below the city of London.

A very curious sequel to Abbott's encounter is this: two days later, she was visited at her home by a government official who, while the pair sat and drank cups of tea, advised her, in fairly relaxed tones, not to talk about the experience. Of course, to a degree, this aspect of Abbott's story inevitably conjures up and provokes Men in Black-style imagery. If true, it suggests that elements of the British government may wish to keep exceedingly quiet the fact that wild animals are on the loose in the heart of London's old tunnels.

Weird and unsettling electronic bleeps and screeches and unintelligible, rapid chatter are common-place. …

Aside from visits by MIB types and the confiscation of corpses—before the truth comes tumbling out—is another angle of MIB lore that plays a role in the ABC puzzle: that of telephone interference. On many occasions, witnesses to UFOs have received strange and unsettling phone calls in the wake of their encounters. Strange, slightly foreign-sounding voices warn people not to talk about their encounters. Weird and unsettling electronic bleeps and screeches and unintelligible, rapid chatter are commonplace, and

that applies to the ABC issue, too. I can't say that my records are bulging on this angle, as they certainly are not, but I do have seven reports on file where witnesses were on the receiving end of what can only be described as telephone harassment.

Notably, in two of those seven cases, the witnesses claimed to have seen the bodies of dead ABCs: one was seen by the side of a road near the English village of Blakeney in 1986 by a shift worker on his way home around 3:00 A.M. The other body was almost literally stumbled upon in October 1987 in an area of woodland near the English town of Bradford-on-Avon during the early afternoon.

In both cases, the cats were very large, powerful-looking, and completely black in color. Neither witness told anyone—outside of their immediate family—anything about their encounters chiefly because they had nothing to back up the claims. In the first case, the witness returned to the site at day-break, around 7:00 A.M., and the body was gone. In the second case, precisely the same thing happened: when the frightened witness told her husband what she had seen, he accompanied her back to the site around 3 or 4 hours later after he had returned home from work. That body, too, had curiously vanished. In both instances, however—and despite neither party having made an official report or having informed the local press—the witnesses were on the near-immediate receiving end of curious phone calls filled with what can only be described as classic MIB-type interference and intimidation.

So, what's going on? Do certain elements of the British government know—with absolute certainty—that the ABCs are 100 percent real? If so, are they doing their very best to prevent what is seen as an entertaining mystery by most from mutating into something that could provoke widespread concern, and perhaps even hysteria, among the population, or do the undeniable MIB-

like overtones to such cases suggest that the ABCs are less than flesh and blood and far more alien themed? Maybe the truth lies in a combination of both realms. Whatever the answer, I can say for sure that while the MIB–ABC angle does not appear to be a major part of the overall controversy, it is one that should be treated seriously. Someone, deep within the heart of officialdom, may very well know something that they don't want the rest of us to know.

CHUPACABRA

For years, controversial tales have surfaced from Puerto Rico—or, to give it its correct title, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, an unincorporated territory of the United States—describing a killer beast creeping around the landscape while simultaneously plunging the population into states of deep fear and apprehension. The reason why is as simple as it is distinctly monstrous: the face of the creature is dominated by a pair of glowing, red eyes; it has razor-style, clawlike appendages; vicious-looking teeth that could likely inflict some truly serious damage; sharp spikes running down its neck and spine; and even, on occasion, large, membranous wings. On top of that, it thrives on blood. Puerto Rico, then, is home to a real-life vampire.

Its moniker is the chupacabra, meaning “goat-sucker”—which

is a reference to the fact that when the tales first surfaced, most of the animals slain by the blood-sucking nightmare were goats. That's right; if you're a goat, it most certainly does not pay to make Puerto Rico your home. It might not be too safe if you're human, either. Much of the monstrous action is focused upon the Caribbean National Forest—El Yunque, as it is known—which is an amazing sight to behold. Around 28,000 acres (11,330 hectares) in size and located in the rugged Sierra de Luquillo, which is approximately twenty-five miles (forty kilometers) southeast of the city of San Juan, it was named after the Indian spirit Yuquiyu and is the only tropical rain forest in the U.S. National Forest System.

More than one hundred billion gallons of precipitation fall each year, creating the junglelike ambience of lush foliage, sparkling leaves, spectacular waterfalls, shining, wet rocks, and shadowy paths that really have to be seen up close and personal to be appreciated. The forest contains rare wildlife, too, including the Puerto Rican parrot, the Puerto Rican boa snake, a multitude of lizards, and crabs, not forgetting the famous coqui frog, so named after its strange and unique vocalizations.

As for the chupacabra, well, its predations and appearance are as legendary as they are feared, and the stories coming from the locals are as notable as they are disturbing. Some years ago, while on one of my now many expeditions to Puerto Rico, I had the opportunity to interview a woman named Norka, an elderly lady living in a truly beautiful home high in the El Yunque rain forest that one can only reach by successfully negotiating an infinitely complex series of treacherous roads, built perilously close to the edge of some very steep hills. Although the exact date escapes her, Norka was driving home one night in 1975 or 1976 when she was both startled and horrified by the shocking sight of a bizarre creature shambling across the road.

Norka described the animal as being approximately four feet in height and having a monkeylike body that was covered in dark brown hair or fur, wings that were a cross between those of a bat and a bird, and glowing eyes that bulged alarmingly from a bat-style visage. Sharp claws flicked ominously in Norka's direction. She could only sit and stare as the beast then turned its back on her and rose slowly into the sky. Since then, eerily similar encounters with such vile entities have haunted the terrified populace of Puerto Rico—and continue to do so.

As evidence of this, in 2004, I traveled to Puerto Rico with fellow monster hunter Jonathan Downes of the British-based Centre for Fortean Zoology. During the course of our weeklong expedition in search of the truth behind the beast, we had the opportunity to speak with numerous sources, including a rancher named Noel, who had an amazing account to relate.

Some months previously, he was awakened during the hours of darkness on one particular morning by the sound of his chickens that were practically screaming down the house. Much to his chagrin, however, Noel failed to get out of bed and waited until dawn broke to see what all the fuss had been about. He told us that he was horrified to find all of his prized birds dead. Not only were they dead, they had two small puncture wounds on their necks, and checks by a veterinarian friend demonstrated that their bodies were missing significant amounts of blood.

Descriptions of the chupacabra have ranged far and wide. This drawing is similar to what was described by Norka in the 1970s, except that it lacks fur.

However, what made this particular case so intriguing and memorable was the fact that whatever had killed the chickens had first carefully and quietly opened the complex locks on each of the cages before evacuating them of blood. This suggested to me and Jon that a diabolically sophisticated degree of cunning, intelligence, and dexterity was at work. The chupacabra, then, may be far more than just your average wild animal. So, with that in mind, precisely what is it?

Certainly, theories wildly abound with respect to the nature of the beast, with some researchers and witnesses suggesting that it is some form of giant bat. Others prefer the controversial theory that it has extraterrestrial origins. A notably large body of people view the chupacabra as a wholly supernatural beast, one created—or

conjured up—out of devilish rite and ritual. The most bizarre idea postulated, however, is that the chupacabra is the creation of a top-secret genetic research laboratory hidden somewhere deep within Puerto Rico's El Yunque rain forest. Whichever theory may prove to be correct—and other possibilities may exist, too—undoubtedly, one chilling thing seems to be true: Puerto Rico has a monster in its midst. For our purposes, though, let's take a look at the alien–UFO link to the chupacabra.

To prevent people from learning the truth of the matter, a diversionary tactic was put into place that the UFO was a meteorite.

A story of a UFO crashing in the heart of El Yunque in February 1984 exists. I know that because the basics of the account have reached me on three occasions over the past decade. It was early one morning when a large, circular-shaped object slammed into the ground immediately after flying over the rain forest in a decidedly erratic fashion. To prevent people from learning the truth of the matter, a diversionary tactic was put into place that the UFO was a meteorite. Personnel from NASA, the U.S. Air Force, and the CIA were soon on the scene in part to scoop up the pummeled body parts of a couple of dead chupacabras, whose lives came to sudden and bloody ends when the alien craft hurtled violently into the forest at high speed. That's how the story goes, anyway.

Another reason why I am so intrigued by the potential UFO link to the chupacabra controversy is because of something that happened back in 2004. Shortly after the Proof Positive shoot was

completed for the SyFy Channel, I spoke with a woman who had her own encounter with a UFO but in a location where a chupacabra was seen only days later. As Rosario told me, it was early March 2000, and she was working in a grove near the foot of El Yunque where she picked plantains. Her attention was suddenly drawn to a deep, resonating hum, one that was coming from directly above her.

Looking up, Rosario was startled to see a black, triangular-shaped object—about 25 to 35 feet (7 to 11 kilometers) in length—that was hovering overhead at a height estimated to be around 90 to 120 feet (27 to 36 meters) and which had a glossy, shiny surface. Surprise and amazement turned to shock when a pencil-thin beam of light shot out of the base of the craft, fanned out, and enveloped Rosario in a pink glow.

For what almost seemed like an eternity, Rosario was rooted to the spot while her mind was flooded with images of widespread nuclear destruction and environmental collapse in Earth's near future. The final image was of a large, bald head with huge, black eyes that closely resembled the alien face on the cover of Whitley Strieber's 1987 best-selling book Communion—which Rosario was inexplicably drawn to read in the immediate aftermath.

Suddenly, the light retracted, and the flying triangle rose into the sky, heading slowly toward the heart of the rain forest. Interestingly, in the wake of the encounter, Rosario developed an overwhelming interest in environmental issues, and quite literally overnight—after a lifetime of eating meat—became a staunch advocate of vegetarianism.

That was not all; three days later, only a couple hundred feet from where Rosario was working on that fateful day, two girls spotted a chupacabra of the bipedal, spiked, and decidedly menacing kind. The beast spotted them, too. Evidently, however, it

was a monster on a mission since, after peering at them for a few moments, it fell down on all fours and bounded away into the heavy undergrowth. It was an event that—due to both the time frame and the proximity—led Rosario to conclude that the chupacabra was somehow linked to the UFO phenomenon, and here's the clincher: she, too, had heard rumors of a dead chupacabra found in a crashed UFO some years earlier that had been secretly taken to Roosevelt Roads.

Also of relevance, while in Puerto Rico in 2005 with Paul Kimball and his Red Star Films crew, our guide, Orlando, was filmed talking about a 1990s-era event in which U.S. military forces reportedly captured several extremely vicious chupacabras in El Yunque. What happened to them, beyond first being held at Roosevelt Roads and then flown on to the United States—in secure cages aboard a military aircraft—is unknown. Then there is the matter of an entire village of strange, alien-looking people living in an area where sightings of chupacabras were rife.

According to the tale—which half the film crew and a couple of locals had all heard—the entire population of the village was afflicted by a strange malady—a very strange malady. The village folk, we were told, were skinny, pale, and downright anemic looking. They never surfaced during daylight hours, they only ever dressed in black, and the clincher: they fed on nothing but fresh blood. To a pair of English vampire hunters, it all sounded great; it was precisely the sort of thing Jon and I were looking for. That didn't mean it was true, however—or did it? Well, let's see.

It has been my experience that behind just about every controversial legend or rumor is usually a nugget or several of

truth, even if it is somewhat distorted. We asked our storytellers to expand on what they knew of this infernal tribe of bloodsuckers. They were happy to do so. The picture their words painted was notably unsettling. None of the people of the village exceeded four and a half feet in height, we were told. Their heads were larger than normal and were marked with prominent, blue veins. They were completely lacking in hair. Some of them had nothing fewer than six fingers on each hand. Their noses were almost beaklike. They had skin that gave them a leathery, wrinkled, aged look. Their genitals were supposedly nearly nonexistent. As for their voices, they were oddly high pitched. They walked with a stiff, robotic gait. They dined voraciously on human blood.

Chupacabras are said to be adept at breaking into padlocked and secured livestock areas so they can nab and eat the animals inside.

On hearing all of this, Jon and I looked knowingly at each other. The symptoms that were described to us (aside, that is, from the blood drinking) were not those of vampirism at all but of a distressing, and extremely rare, condition called progeria: a tragic, genetic affliction that affects children. In fact, it's so rare that, officially at least, only one case exists per every eight million

people on the planet. Progeria provokes rapid aging and a physical appearance near-identical to that of the so-called vampires that dwelled on the Canovanas River. In some cases, those with progeria show signs of polydactylism: an extra digit on the hands and/or feet. Life spans are usually short, from early teens to (at the absolute extreme) the twenties. Of course, given the rarity of progeria, this instantly made both of us wonder: how was it possible that an entire village could be affected by this genetic disorder and across what we were told were, at least, several generations? The answer we got was as amazing as it was controversial.

Back in 1957, something was said to have crashed to Earth in the Canovanas region, something very unusual, as I mentioned in an earlier chapter. Among those we spoke to, the opinion was split between a meteorite and a craft from another world: a UFO. Whatever the culprit, it had let loose in the area nothing less than a strange alien virus, one that wormed its way into the water supply of the village and, in no time at all, infected the population of thirty or forty. The result was disastrous: each and every subsequent newborn displayed the awful symptoms of what, to Jon and me, sounded acutely like progeria.

As startling as it may seem, the threat of an alien virus surfacing on our world is one that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) takes very seriously.

According to the text of Article IX of "The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies" that was collectively signed in Washington, D.C.; London, England; and Moscow, Russia, on January 27, 1967, and that was entered into force on October 10 of that year: "In the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial

bodies, States Parties to the Treaty shall be guided by the principle of co-operation and mutual assistance and shall conduct all their activities in outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, with due regard to the corresponding interests of all other States Parties to the Treaty."

Most significant of all is the next section of the document: "States Parties to the Treaty shall pursue studies of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, and conduct exploration of them so as to avoid their harmful contamination and also adverse changes in the environment of the Earth resulting from the introduction of extraterrestrial matter and, where necessary, shall adopt appropriate measures for this purpose."

It must be stressed that the main concern, as described in the document, revolved around the fear that a deadly virus would be released into Earth's atmosphere, a worldwide pandemic would begin, and an unstoppable plague would escalate, ultimately killing each and every one of us. However, what if that same alien pandemic didn't kill us but provoked progeria-style symptoms and a craving for human blood?

Such a possibility sounds manifestly unlikely in the extreme. It's worth noting, however, that the so-called extraterrestrial "Greys" of "alien-abduction" lore—those dwarfish, skinny, black-eyed, and gray-skinned creatures that are so instantly recognizable to one and all and made famous on the likes of The X-Files—do, admittedly, display far more than a few characteristics of progeria.

Could the appearance of the grey aliens be a result of some form of progeria, a disease that causes hair loss, lack of body fat, shrunken facial features, and shortness of stature?

On the matter of the Greys possibly being affected by progeria, Flying Saucer Review magazine noted: "If Greys have progeria, then there is a very serious situation out there. An entire civilization may be threatened with extinction because their children and young people are dying. A possible reason why progeria may be so widespread among Greys and not among humans is probably because the Greys have been around much longer than humans and the DNA replication is probably deteriorating, making room for genetic mutations and serious genetic diseases.… One reason why they may want to hybridize with Homo sapiens is to add healthier DNA to their gene pool and to weed out the progeria gene."

I chatted with Jon about this, and I had to wonder: was it feasible that a strange, extraterrestrial plague—or, perhaps,

futuristic gene tinkering linked to the alien-abduction phenomenon—had provoked a disastrous outbreak of something that manifested in a combination of progeria and vampirism, all among the population of a small Puerto Rican village? It seemed incredible and outlandish to even give the matter serious thought. Certainly, when all attempts to verify the story came to absolutely nothing, and even the exact location in question could not be identified, we came to a couple of tentative conclusions. First, perhaps what was being described was not progeria after all but the results of decades of inbreeding in a village that was in dire need of new blood (no pun intended). Second, the idea that these unfortunate people were vampires was almost certainly born out of superstitious fear of their curious appearances rather than hard, literal proof that they thrived on human blood—which they almost certainly did not.

Unfortunately, and regardless of the truth of the matter, everything was against us in this investigation. No one was able to point us in the specific direction of the village. To the best of everyone's knowledge, no photographs of the villagers existed, and the tight schedule we were on meant that we did not have enough time to pursue this admittedly fascinating tale. While a down-to-earth explanation was probably the likely one, try as we might, neither Jon nor I could fully dismiss from our minds the dark notion that Puerto Rico might harbor a band of unholy vampires of the outer space kind, a band with a voracious need for human blood. It was a chilling thought. It still is.

Reports and sightings of the strange and sinister creatures continue to come my way; they probably always will. Certainly,

one of the weirdest of all the new accounts did not surface out of the mainland United States or from Puerto Rico's El Yunque rain forest. Rather, the story came from Rukshin, Ukraine, which is a sovereign state in Eastern Europe. In the summer of 2016, practically the whole population of the area was plunged into a collective state of fear when violent attacks on farm animals began out of the blue in the dead of night. Frightened locals refused to leave their homes after the Sun had set. Who can blame them for that? The local police carefully patrolled the area at all times. No wonder: a savage and violent monster was wildly on the loose. By now, you know its infamous name all too well.

As was the case in the tales that came out of Puerto Rico in the mid-1990s onward, chickens, rabbits, and goats were drained of significant amounts of blood. In fact, the highly emotive word "sucked" was used by the press on what amounted to more than a few occasions. Farmers reported that the animal in their midst was strong enough to tear open metal cages with its huge teeth and powerful, bone-crunching jaws. The creepy culprit remained evasive and elusive for several tumultuous months until the creature was swiftly killed by an irate farmer who—having had just about enough of all the mayhem—caught sight of the beast, chased after it, and then finally plunged his pitchfork into its body. The creature was slain. No doubt, the people of Rukshin sighed with relief when the carnage was over.

The local media covered the story—even providing a photo of the dead animal. It looked remarkably like the so-called "Texas chupacabra." In other words, it was a bizarre-looking, hairless canid that resembled a coyote but had a few undeniably strange, physical mutations. The fact that the attacks then came to an abrupt end strongly suggests that the hairless thing was not one of a large pack but a solitary animal.

The type of chupacabra that has been described in places such as Texas and southern California looks more like a bizarre, hairless coyote such as this one on display in the ghost town of Calico, California.

Mexico was also a target for the chupacabra in 2016—in fact, very oddly, at the very same time that Ukraine was under assault. A coincidence? Probably, but it only served to demonstrate the ever-present weirdness that dominates the saga of the chupacabra. This time, the place was Chihuahua. One particular farmer, in early June, awoke to find ten of his animals—most of them goats—"with head and neck wounds that he believes were caused by the infamous 'goat sucker' in a rural community southeast of Delicias," which is located southeast of Chihuahua City, around three hundred miles south of El Paso, Texas. Matters soon, and somewhat inexplicably, came to a quick end. The beast that was responsible for the attacks was never seen, but the locals only had one answer: a chupacabra had been stealthily paying visits of a

terrible kind.

One year later, in July 2017, dark murmurings occurred of a chupacabra prowling around Riverside, California. Cary Shuker, a private contractor of Box Springs Mountain, said, with a high degree of justification, that the animal he saw was "the ugliest-looking thing." Notably, he added that it was "at least two feet or more longer than the biggest coyote you've ever seen. I yelled at it, in a big deep voice, 'Get out of here!'" Shuker had a very good reason for shouting at the animal: it was in the process of attacking his pet cat. Shuker was certain: "This wasn't no coyote, by any means."

The fact that the mysterious animal was around two feet longer than the average coyote suggests that something was very unusual about it. Other locals reported seeing the creature, too. M. J. Blunt told the media: "That is the strangest-looking animal I've ever seen." No doubt! Blunt explained that when she had the distinct misfortune to encounter it, the thing was plucking fruit from one of the trees in her front yard. She expanded: "The ears of a deer, long snout, no hair, tail like a rat, long hindquarters. I thought it might be a sick coyote, a sick wolf. But it had too many different characteristics from any of them."

Another witness was Tom Brundige. He was quoted as saying: "We're looking at it dead on. It has a body like a Chihuahua, stretched out, with a large thoracic cavity. And it has huge hind legs. It has a very narrow, rat-like face, with undulations, more like a marsupial." Brundige made a very interesting and thought-provoking statement: "The donkeys that come from central Mexico, they come right through my gate. These guys, I believe,

followed them from Central America."

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife were sure that the animal that caused all the fuss and fear was not a chupacabra.

CLAWED ALIENS

What if one of ufology's most cherished cases turned out to be something very different? Something far more down-to-earth but of a distinctly conspiratorial nature? Yep, I can see the daggers being drawn already. Too bad for the belief-driven; nothing is worse than a mind made up, and nothing is better than shaking things up and addressing alternative theories when it comes to the matter of UFOs. After all, none of us really know what the truth is when it comes to the UFO phenomenon, so thinking outside of the box is vital. All of which brings us to a certain famous UFO event of late 1973.

On the night of October 10, 1973, two men—Charles Hickson and Calvin Parker—were fishing on the banks of Mississippi's Pascagoula River. All was going fine until approximately 9:00 P.M.

rolled around. That's when all hell broke loose, yet it all began relatively calmly. It didn't stay that way, however. As they fished, Parker and Hickson suddenly noticed a light in the distance. Not only that, it was following the river and appeared to be coming in their direction, which was not necessarily a good thing.

As the light got closer, they could see it in its full glory: the light was actually a brightly lit, somewhat egg-shaped craft, from which came a deep, throbbing hum. Such was the intensity of the hum, it provoked intense nausea in both men. Confusion, and a sense of distinct unreality, quickly followed. The pair watched in horror and amazement as what was described as a "hatch" opened, and a trio of very strange-looking creatures exited the hovering object: they had aerial-like protrusions coming out of their heads and "hands" that resembled the claws of a lobster. Even stranger, and much more unnerving, the three things floated from the craft, across the waters of the river, and toward Hickson and Parker.

The aliens were not of the famous large-headed, black-eyed, and dwarfish kind, however. They weren't even of the benevolent-looking, so-called "Space Brothers" variety of the 1950s. Nope, this particular breed of E.T. was described later by the shocked and undeniably traumatized men as being humanoid, with faces that appeared to be almost masked and heads from which three carrot-style points protruded. On top of that, they had large, crab-like or lobsterlike claws.

Then matters got even worse: when the things from another world were practically on top of the terrified Parker and Hickson, both men were rendered into a state of paralysis. Whether due to some technology of the aliens or provoked by overwhelming fear remains unknown. Maybe it was a combination of both. Suddenly, the entities seized the pair, who were manhandled onto the UFO. Like most abductees, Hickson and Parker were quickly reduced to

the equivalents of lab rats. When the trauma-filled encounter was over, the pair was dumped back on the edge of the river.

The story, hardly surprisingly, became a UFO classic in quick time. The media was soon on the case, as was the military. While Parker chose to keep out of the limelight, Hickson went on to write a book about his experience (UFO Contact at Pascagoula, cowritten with William Mendez) and spoke about it on the lecture circuit, but were the pair really abducted by aliens, or could something have occurred that was, in many ways, even stranger? Let's see.

Charles Hickson and Calvin Parker were fishing on the banks of the Pascagoula River in Mississippi when they were abducted by aliens and had experiments performed on them. The 1973 case is one of the more famous abductee stories.

It's a seldom-discussed fact that only a handful of miles from where Parker and Hickson were "abducted by aliens" is a stretch of land called Horn Island. As one might expect, it's a tranquil place with clean sands, marshes, and a wide variety of birds, such as pelicans and herons, and more than a few alligators, too, but something more about Horn Island is worth noting. In the latter stages of the Second World War, the military explored the possibility of using Horn Island as a place where both chemical- and biological-warfare research could be undertaken. The U.S. Army's Chemical Corps did likewise in the early 1950s—specifically when its research into so-called "mind-control" and mind-manipulation drugs was taking off. We're talking about work associated with the notorious MKUltra program.

The official line is that the research was cancelled due to one quite understandable reason: with Horn Island being significantly windy at times, having mind-altering, aerosol-based cocktails affecting the local populace would most assuredly not have been a good thing! However, a different story comes from some of the people who call the area home. Tales exist of covert operations and experiments into mind manipulation that, apparently, did go ahead —many under the auspices of the aforementioned MKUltra as late as the early 1970s. In terms of what may have specifically been used in these operations, fingers point in the direction of BZ or, to give it its correct name, 3-quinuclidinyl benzilate. Its most well-known name is "Buzz." I hardly need to explain why. The nickname nails it.

BZ, an extremely powerful hallucinogen, can provoke

imagery of an incredibly graphic nature, very often of a highly frightening nature. On other occasions, the experience can even be uplifting. As is also so often the case with LSD, it's the setting, the scene, and the mood that typically influence the nature of the BZ experience. The National Academy of Sciences notes that BZ "was investigated as a potential incapacitating agent for military applications," adding that it produces "anticholinergic delirium, a non-specific syndrome of cognitive dysfunction, hallucinations, and inability to perform tasks…."

Also, let's not forget that Horn Island is barely eight miles from where Calvin Parker and Charles Hickson were taken in October 1973. Might the "UFO" actually have been a helicopter? Could the references to the aliens having masklike faces and clawed hands actually have down-to-earth explanations: full-body protection suits, helmets, and thick gloves worn by the abductors and seen by two men rendered into states of mind in which hallucinations were running wild?

It's worth noting that this is not the first time such a story has surfaced. Back in the late 1970s, longtime UFO researcher Rich Reynolds was given a very similar story regarding the equally famous abduction of a Brazilian farmer (and later a lawyer), Antonio Villas Boas. Rich's source: a man named Bosco Nedelcovic, who we will return to very soon.

It was on February 22, 1958, that Villas Boas prepared for Dr. Olavo Fontes—both a respected gastroenterologist at the National School of Medicine in Rio de Janeiro and a highly dedicated flying saucer investigator—a remarkable, and undeniably sensational, document that told of Villas Boas's close encounter with an alien only eight days earlier. However, this was no sterile "take me to your leader"-style experience involving bug-eyed, spindly creatures. According to the twenty-three-year-old farmer, he went

where, quite possibly, no man had ever gone before—so, Villas Boas told Fontes, he did nothing less than get it on with a hot babe from the great and mysterious beyond—and aboard a UFO, no less.

Or did he?

That question brings us back to Bosco Nedelcovic. Now dead, he was a Yugoslavian who worked in South America for an outfit that ultimately became the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Rather notably, Nedelcovic later worked with the Department of Defense, as well as on a 1960s CIA operation to infiltrate the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Policy Studies. The IPS is a think tank that, at the time, was heavily involved in promoting civil rights matters and the anti-Vietnam War movement.

Nedelcovic detailed for Rich Reynolds a scenario nearly identical to that which I have suggested Parker and Hickson may have found themselves in, namely, that of Villas Boas being exposed to hallucinogenic substances, taken onboard a helicopter, and then plunged into the heart of a faked alien encounter.

Rich says: "The story from Nedelcovic was that after Villas Boas had been subjected to various drugs, the part with the woman was literally acted out. So, there may have been a real woman. But in Villas Boas's case, it could have been manipulation-induced. It gave me visions of the CIA employing people of an Asian-kind of demeanor and look. It's in the realm of possibility that someone was concocting a scenario in that way."

Interestingly, Nedolcovic told Rich that "the men were participating in new forms of psychological testing that would eventually be used in military contexts."

While many ufologists champion the Villas Boas affair, let's

take a look at what the man himself actually said about the "UFO" onto which he was taken. Bear in mind that these are Villas Boas's words, not mine. The craft was, he recalled, "like a large elongated egg … on the upper part of the machine there was something which was revolving at great speed and also giving off a powerful reddish light."

In the Villas Boas abduction case, the subject was taken aboard a UFO, where he had sex with an alien female for the purpose of creating a hybrid.

It rose "slowly into the air until it had reached a height of some 30 to 50 meters.… The whirring noise of the air being displaced became much more intense and the revolving dish began to turn at a fearful speed.… At that moment, the machine suddenly changed direction, with an abrupt movement, making a louder noise, a sort of 'beat.'"

So, we have an elongated, egglike craft—not a flying saucer.

It sounds not unlike a helicopter with a bulbous front. Something was atop the object that was "revolving at great speed." Rotor blades, perhaps? Also consider the noise coming from the craft: "a sort of beat." Put all of those issues together, and what we have is a classic description of a helicopter.

Is it possible that for decades, new and revolutionary mind-altering substances have been utilized and tested—specifically undercover of a "UFO camouflage"—to determine just how extensively the human mind can be manipulated? It may not be what whole swathes of the UFO research community want to hear—but that's just too bad.

CROP CIRCLE MAKERS

Matthew Williams is a Welshman who, in 2000, was arrested, charged, and convicted for causing damage to property at a farm in the south of England; he received a small fine. What Williams had done was create a highly intricate crop circle in a field owned by the farmer. The story made big news in the United Kingdom. Since then, Williams has made, quite literally, dozens of crop circles over the course of the past two decades. It's not surprising that many people in the arenas of crop circle- and UFO-based research view Williams as a hoaxer. That, however, is very far removed from the truth of the matter. Williams believes that he, and the various other crop circle makers in the United Kingdom, are in essence being used as vessels to create crop circles on behalf of aliens! In other words, Williams is of the view that

extraterrestrial artists are using people like him, who are receiving downloaded instructions—from alien mind to human mind—to make formations of the aliens' design and desire. As strange as this may sound to many, it's worth it to take a careful look at what Williams has to say on this controversy-filled issue. The following is the unedited statement of Williams, given to me a number of years ago:

"My early research efforts involved investigating areas where crop circles were expected to appear. I coordinated efforts with other friends and researchers via radios, and we patrolled crop fields in our cars, armed with night-vision equipment. Back in those hazy days, I used to think hoaxing was bad and that people who made crop circles were trying to confuse us and lead us away from the path of discovering deeply encoded alien messages. I was on a mission to stop manmade crop circles appearing. Many researchers I knew believed that the crop circles were alien in origin and felt there was nothing to be gained in trying to police human circle makers, as, in the opinion of the researchers, there were very few crop circles created by people anyway; and the researchers I knew were sure that they could tell the difference between a manmade crop circle and an alien-made crop circle.

"The standard method of researching crop circles generally involved going into them on the same day they had formed and studying what was present. My own motivation was to get closer to whatever was creating the crop circles, at night and when the circles were formed. If we had caught any human in the act of crop circle hoaxing, then the plan was to scare them off or perhaps even call the police. In fact, our field surveillance activities were actually welcomed by the police as a form of anti-criminal vigilance. If we could be sure we had cleared a field of any human-made crop circles, then logic dictated that if a crop circle

did appear, it must be genuine.

"Our encounters with human crop circle makers extended as far as spotting suspected faces of known crop circle makers drinking in local pubs and driving around suspiciously in their cars after dark. Surprise, surprise: in the morning we would have a crop circle or two in the area. But the appearance of known crop circle makers did give us some clues as to their authorship. It wasn't until about 1994 that I decided to seek out the human crop circle makers, and what subsequently happened could be termed the 'other side' of the story. By this time, I had a good idea that many crop circles were made by humans but was unsure if there was a level of disinformation being spread. It was then I met [crop circle researcher and maker] Rob Irving and heard his immortal quote, which I still use to illustrate the simplicity of the crop circle argument: 'You'll never be sure until you actually make one.'

Crop circles are mysterious patterns of crushed-down grass or crops that many have speculated are caused by alien craft.

"The reason I had missed the voices of the human crop circle makers was simple: these talented metaphysical artists aren't allowed a voice in the crop circle research community; and because of this, their position isn't largely known. I now know that there is a calculated effort to deny the existence of human crop circle makers and to stop the spread of their information, which is a tactic of the hardcore crop circle believers. In essence, a misinformation campaign is being waged against the truth of human-made crop circles and is being perpetrated by the modern-day crop circles researchers. This is a form of pro-paranormal propaganda which serves to hide the down-to-earth realities from an eager-to-believe public. However, saying that crop circles are man-made does not dissolve the mystery. The paranormal still remains.

"What I learned next was totally unexpected, as the crop circle makers I spoke to did not debunk the theories that paranormal events take place in crop circles, even if they are man-made. Indeed, there was much talk of strange lights and events happening to the crop circle makers while they made crop circles at night. I was given countless tales of UFO activity and even strange synchronicities which took place in the manmade crop circles, and which made the crop circle makers wonder if they were being influenced by a higher, guiding hand—perhaps at the design stage, or out in the field. Needless to say, my interest was piqued. However, I couldn't just take the crop circle makers' word for it. The gauntlet was set and I had the tools to prove the truth, but I had to take the plunge and start making crop circles in order to see if strange things might happen to me. I had to test their claims out and make sure that they weren't just making those claims to get

attention, or to mislead.

I became aware that the vast majority of crop circles that were appearing were man-made.

"I befriended a number of circles teams and watched crop circles being made under various conditions. Back in the early days, I thought that speaking to the human crop circle makers would help me to determine which crop circles were made by unknown persons or paranormal forces. Later on, however, I became convinced that human-made crop circles made up the whole sum of the complex pictograms, leaving only very simple crop circles as possible unknowns. As my experience of crop circle maker techniques increased, I became aware of the telltale signs left by the guys with their boards and garden rollers. I became aware that the vast majority of crop circles that were appearing were manmade.

"When I say manmade, I mean it. To the best of my knowledge, there are no female teams out there making crop circles. I would have loved to have known there were women teams out there. But perhaps there are and I haven't yet met them. To date, my experience and research has shown me that hundreds of people I have spoken to have had what appear to be genuine paranormal experiences inside manmade crop circles. The scope and variance of just exactly what people can expect to experience from crop circles is beyond the capacity of me to describe, but suffice to say that the crop circles bring out external paranormal forces and seem to help people attune into their hidden abilities.

"I believe that the human crop circle makers may be guided

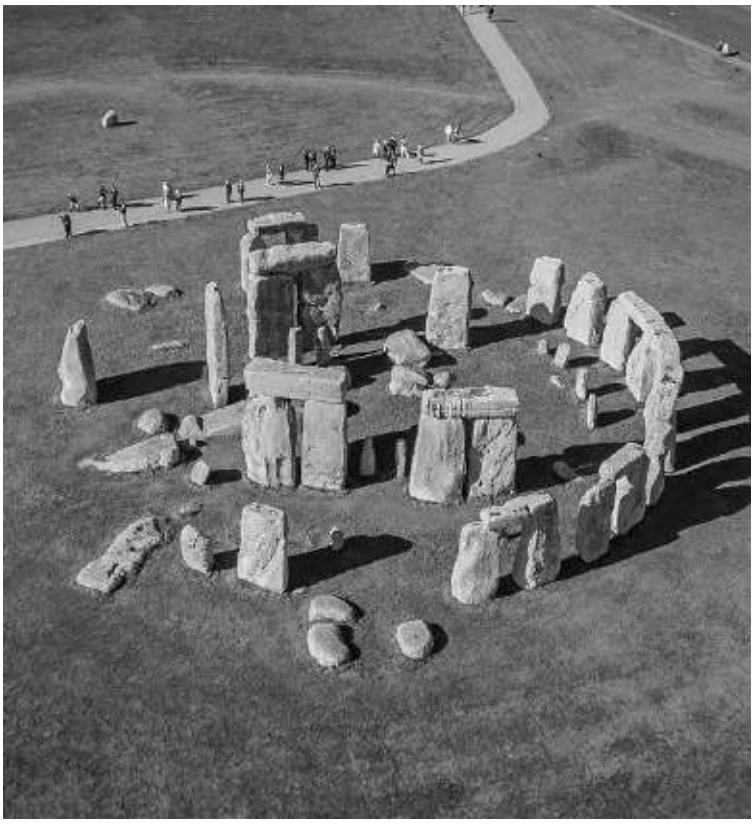
by a connection to a higher intelligence, a gestalt or group mind; and the symbols that are put down are deep-routed subconscious expressions. This would explain why some telepaths or psychics claim to have seen crop circle designs before they appear—because we are all dialed into the same group-mind 'internet.' The synchronistic events which happen each year in the unfolding designs that the crop circle makers come out with are often remarked as being too much of a coincidence. Crop circle designs have been repeated in different parts of the country by teams who didn't share designs beforehand. There have even been teams who have gone out on the same night to the same field, made designs, not knowing the other team was present, and their designs have had similarities. The chances of this happening, without planning, are slim; so it would appear that something paranormal is working for the crop circle makers.

"Why do crop circles have power? I know that crop is a living medium. Unlike any other type of canvas that an artist may use, crop has a life-force energy which, when used on such a large scale, makes crops blend natural Earth-energy magic with human-energy magic. What crop circle makers may have rediscovered is the ancient art of natural magic—working with large emblems as part of the energy system of the Earth. Take sacred sites such as stone circles: these were erected as temples for people to visit, perhaps as part of a sacred quest seeking answers. Today, crop circles fill a similar role, attracting people who ask questions and putting visitors closer to paranormal sources.

"Many people have expressed concern to me about humans making crop circles and trying to instill magical energy in them. Along with this comes a distrust of the motives of crop circle makers. However, if researchers are to be believed on the healing energies of many crop circles, then this is not a negative thing, by

definition. Many people take some sort of positive learning or healing experiences from crop circles. We hear of mobile phones or cameras failing inside crop circles. I have no doubt that these things happen; however, if you speak to the people whose equipment just broke down, they will express excitement at the obvious powers of the crop circle.

“Crop circle makers have recently managed to talk about the idea of crop circles being ‘temporary temples’ and this has been accepted by many researchers in the field, even if many researchers don’t want to believe pictograms are made by humans. I feel it is somewhat sad that these same researchers are often stuck in a mode of worshipping the temple itself instead of the paranormal forces that it summons forth. Some people have their eyes glued to the crop instead of researching the paranormal effects on people and finding merit in the fact that manmade crop circles are a doorway to something else. Perhaps the message is to look beyond the crop circle itself and at the added phenomena that associates with the crop circles.



The famous megalithic site of Stonehenge in England may have been a combined starmap and place of worship.

"Megalithic sites such as Avebury and Stonehenge could have been created not only as star maps, but as magical temples for purposes of worship. If this is the case, does it not follow that any large structure with geometric design and careful planning has an effect on the way people connect to higher intelligences? The Church seems to think so; just ask any vicar about the use of sacred geometry in the design and planning of churches and cathedrals. Even the ancient pyramids of various cultures have form and power by their sheer size and complexity, or even simplicity. However, it may be the cabalists and magic schools who hold a clue to the answer of why pictorial designs have power. Shape, form, geometry and intent are many of the things a magician or cabalist would require to be able to create magic. All of these elements are found in Mandala designs and also in crop

circles.

“Drawing attention to human crop circle-making is, to some, an act of heresy against the crop circle-reality religion, which is slowly starting to emerge. Anyone who tries to research human crop circle-makers risks ex-communication from the various crop circle groups. Indeed, crop circle makers have had death threats from hardcore believers. One wonders sometimes: did some of these researchers understand the message of love and light they claim to have encountered through the crop circles?

“Over the years from 1994, I participated as crop circle maker, designer of crop circles, and as observer to other persons, creating crop circles. They are typically created in the dark, just after it gets too dark to be seen in the field. Typically, this was from 10:00 to 11:00 P.M. in the British summer months. Teams of between two and nine would work under the guidance of whichever team member designed or studied the design. Coordination is essential among team members.

“The actual laying down of the crop circle is usually done in stages. The first stage is known as foot-lining, which means the creation of the thin part of the design, without doing the shaded areas of the design, which represent flattened areas of crop. One person will hold one end of a tape measure. The distance on the tape measure is found and the other end of the tape is held. One end of the tape is held in place and the other end is walked around, creating your circles. Holding the tape tight is important, as over a distance of 100 feet you can get considerable sag in the tape which can, if not handled correctly, cause circles to have wobbly edges.

“To etch in the internal designs, two ends of the tape are held, which gives a straight line, and a third person walks along the edge of the tape. It is important to note that these etching lines, created by the width of your foot in the crop, are often visible as thin lines

hinted at when aerial photos of crop circles are zoomed in on. Marker posts are used to guide tape-measurement points. These points are driven into the ground and are often made of bamboo posts, similar to those found in garden use.

“Once the design is fully etched with foot-lines, then the process of filling takes place. The teams have to be briefed as to which parts are to be filled or left standing. There are usually simple rules to follow to make sure you don’t flatten the wrong area. Often tramlines or tractor lines are mistaken for starting or stopping points for filling work. In the filling stage, planks of wood affixed with ropes are used to press down with large areas of crop. Approximately one meter in width, these boards will leave tell-tale signs of human construction when viewed from the ground or the air.

“The appearance of many circles will be a combed effect. Some types of crops, brittle plants or late-in-the-season plants, fall down well and do not grow back up to the light. Formations created in these fields look very impressive because the ground-lay, with its flat uniformity, shines from the air when photographed from the correct angle. It must be stressed that most crop circle makers do their work for no money. There have been occasional instances where certain designs have been commissioned and the farmer has been paid for use of the field. This is very rare. On the whole, the act of making a crop circle is for no other reward to the crop circle maker than seeing others get happiness or enlightenment from the crop circle, while perhaps having the occasional paranormal event in it.

“The experiences that crop circle makers have had while out in the fields at night are exhaustive. It is safe to say, though, that many crop circle makers draw their beliefs that they are working with paranormal or magical forces from their own personal

experiences. This is what draws a crop circle maker back to want to do more. It is sad that many believer-researchers have chosen to demonize crop circle makers for their work, claiming that they didn't make any crop circles, even ones which are done for demonstration purposes, with video-filming and witnesses. Many crop circle researchers are keen to copyright their photos and tracings of crop circles, making the crop circles a form of property. I am against any forms of commercialism which exist in the crop circle research field.

"Crop circle makers tread a thin line. On the one had, they want people to come to them and get experiences from the crop circles. If crop circles were known as a 100-percent, manmade hoax, then the public might turn away. So this is why authorship of most crop circles remains anonymous, for legal reasons and for reasons of sensitivity. However, to stem the rot of blind belief in crop circles and to make sure crop circle makers and their motives are known to those who have delved deeper, there is a dialogue between some researchers and crop circle makers. This is to allow the more open-minded to see the bigger picture at work.

People have figured out how to make crop circles themselves, sometimes mimicking the real ones but other times making playful designs that are obvious fakes.

"Crop circle folklore and myth [are] created on a daily basis because of the stories that little balls of light are seen in and around the fields where crop circles appear. UFOs are seen to fly over fields where circles appeared. However, researchers use leaps of faith in their deductions to say that UFOs or balls of light must have been responsible for creating the crop circles and are prepared to believe any anecdotal scrap of information that they gather. These scraps of anecdotal evidence are often put together as part of a giant conspiracy theory of why the government knows the truth about crop circles and wants to keep it all under wraps. It is all a part of the government's plan to misinform the public, we are told.

They carried on doing this wild dance, like a ceremony; but what was odd was they seemed to glitter, particularly on their arms, like little globes of light flickering.

"Thankfully, most people who come into crop circle research know the truth. It's not even hiding from people or researchers. If you want to find out the truth about who is making crop circles and how and why, a visit to Wiltshire one summer will answer all your questions. Don't be put off from speaking to crop circle makers because of what you hear from crop circle researchers. The latter have a vested interest in keeping you away from us. Be suspicious of researchers' motives. There is usually a calendar or an overpriced lecture ticket to be sold.

"One night, I was sitting in the car about 9 o'clock at night and suddenly saw this light that seemed to be coming from Adam's Grave [a 196-foot-high] long barrow with an ancient burialchamber at its southeast end], which is on Walker's Hill. I had all my equipment with me—cameras, night-scopes and binoculars—and so I jumped out of the car and focused on Adam's Grave. It was a bright, moonlit night and Walker's Hill was all lit up.

"Through the binoculars I could see a chap on top of it holding what seemed to be a torch. I could tell he was wearing what looked like either a long, dark coat or a black cloak. So, I then got my night-vision equipment for a better look and could see he was walking back and forwards on Adam's Grave. Well, I watched him for a few minutes and then went back to the car to get some food. Then, about ten minutes later, I thought I'd take a

look again. When I looked up again, I could see that there was a group of figures standing in a circle around this man. What was stranger was that I could only make out their shape, but not their clothing. And as I watched, they began what looked like a dance: a ritual dance like those of the [Native American] Indians. But the weird thing was that he just stood there, and it was like he couldn't even see them.

"Whatever these creatures were, they suddenly began to shrink in size, to about the size of small children. They carried on doing this wild dance, like a ceremony; but what was odd was they seemed to glitter, particularly on their arms, like little globes of light flickering. I thought: What the hell are they? So, I packed the equipment back in the car, edged my way towards Adam's Grave and hoped no-one could see me, and then sprinted the last bit to surprise them and see what was going on. But when I got there, the figures were gone and the chap was gone, too. The moon lit up the whole area, but there was no one, nothing. I stood around for a while, searched out the whole area, and then went back to the car. There wasn't really much more I could do. This was a night when I decided to make a formation after taking LSD. People can say I was hallucinating. But I've taken enough LSD to know the difference between really tripping and being opened to something that I wouldn't see in a normal state of mind; and this was definitely the latter. I was right in the middle of making the circle when I heard something at the edge of it.

"There was one time, I'd rather not say when or where exactly, as I could get into trouble for admitting I trespassed on the farmer's land and made the formation. Plus, I had a friend named Paul helping me with this one. We were making this circle when we noticed these three bright lights—small balls of lights coming towards the field. We watched them; we were fascinated. But they

split up and each of them went to a corner of the field—and which only left one corner for us to leave by without getting too close to these things. That was a bit unsettling. We didn't know what these balls were; so we raced out of the open corner of the field. We looked back as we ran and could see the balls heading towards us: gliding very gracefully just above the top of the crop. It was like they were on a railway track, just moving very smoothly, but it left us sort of disturbed too: like they were almost ghostly and alive.

"Well, I went to get the car, and told Paul to wait in the bushes at the edge of the road so he wouldn't be seen. The last thing I wanted was for him to get arrested if the police happened to drive past. But by the time I had got the car and got back to Paul, he was walking up the middle of the road with all his crop circle equipment in full view. I pulled up, wound the window down and shouted at him: 'What the hell are you doing? If people see you carrying your [crop circle-making] equipment, we'll get arrested.'

"Paul looked scared stiff and said: 'If they had arrested me, I'd have gone with them, just to get me out of there.' I asked him what he meant, and Paul said that while I was getting the car he had heard these strange, animallike screaming noises coming from inside the field and he had just charged out of there and onto the road. We never found out what it was though.

"When we make these formations, we always incorporate what I call a spiritual framework into the creation. We say an invocation: asking for the spirits to come to the circle to give it energy, to protect us while we make the circle, and we ask that people be given positive experiences in the circle."

CROWLEY'S ALIEN

Born on October 12, 1875, in Leamington, England, Aleister Crowley was the son of a rich brewer and was raised in a strict Christian household. Indeed, Crowley's father, Edward, was a preacher in a sect known as the Plymouth Brethren. In 1881, the Crowley family moved to Redhill, Surrey, and the young Aleister was sent to an evangelist school. Although it was his intention to become a chemist, Crowley soon became interested in religious studies and developed a passion for alchemy and magick. In 1898, that interest led him to the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn.

He then moved in with Allan Bennett, a member of the Golden Dawn, and under the guidance of Bennett began to experiment with ritual magick. Inheriting a considerable fortune from his father, Crowley lived life to its fullest in London, Paris,

and Mexico—the latter where he quickly became a 33rd-degree Mason, and in 1900, he returned to England and, at the age of twenty-five, headed to Scotland and purchased Boleskine House, which can be found on the shores of Loch Ness.

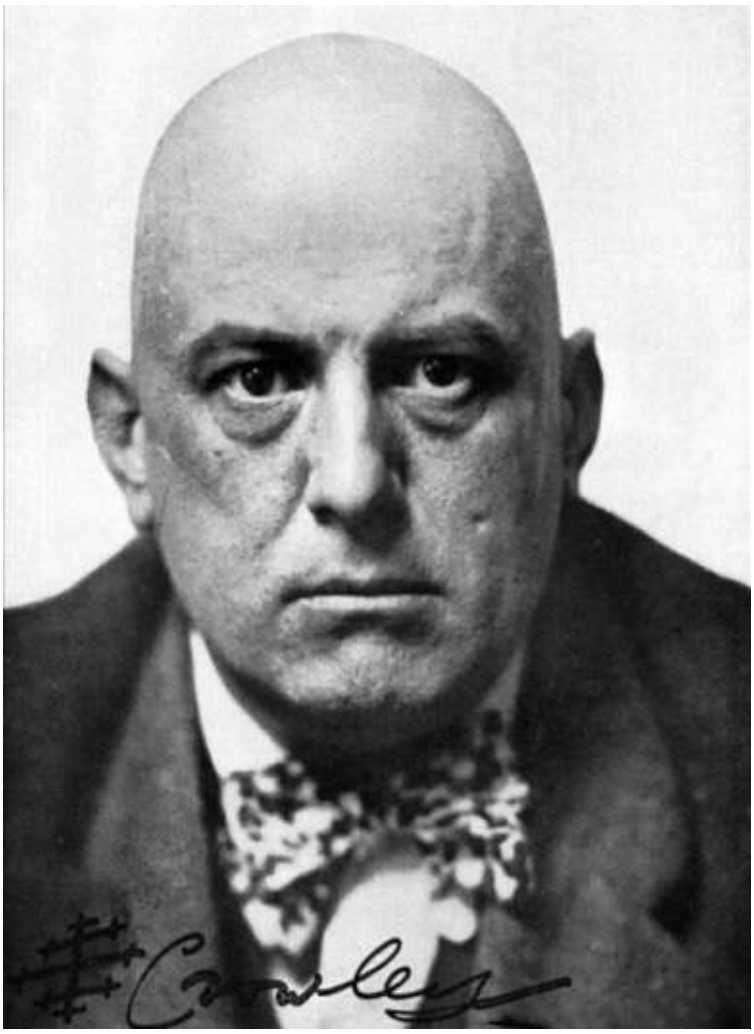
Interestingly, at the site of what is probably the world's most famous alleged monster, Crowley's actions (which included black masses and wild orgies) led to some disturbing phenomena. In his autobiography, Crowley described how the spirits he had succeeded in summoning got perilously out of hand, causing one housemaid to leave and a workman to go mad. He also insinuated that he was indirectly responsible for a local butcher accidentally severing an artery and bleeding to death. Crowley had allegedly written the names of certain demons on a bill from the butcher's shop. However, it is to Crowley's actions and activities in 1918 that we must now turn our attention.

"UFOs are limited only by our imagination; and to consider them merely craft from another galaxy is as narrow a view as postulating that newborn babies are delivered by the stork," says researcher and author Adam Gorightly. He continues: "UFOs are also—in my estimation—a product of altered consciousness, which is not to suggest that all sightings are in part, or in whole, complete hallucinations. What I'm suggesting is that in order to observe UFOs, one must often enter into a more receptive state, much like a psychic or channeler tuning into voices or subtle energies. Channelers must first induce in themselves a trance state before being able to contact 'voices from the beyond.' The same goes for magickal workings wherein magicians carry out rituals in order to invoke spirits and/or demons."

Gorightly elaborates thus: "A corollary to the above statement is the famed Amalantrah Working of legendary occultist Aleister Crowley, which consisted of a series of visions he received from

January through March of 1918 via his then ‘Scarlet Woman,’ one Roddie Minor. Throughout his life, Crowley had a number of Scarlet Women, who acted as ‘Channels’ for other-worldly transmissions of angelic and/or demonic origin. The Scarlet Woman also played a large part in Crowley’s notorious sex ritual, at times combining drugs and bestiality to stir up those strange energies into which good ol’ Uncle Al was trying to tap.”

Following on from this point, Crowley chronicler Kenneth Grant wrote: “Crowley was aware of the possibility of opening up the spatial gateways and of admitting extraterrestrial current in the human life-wave.… It is an occult tradition—and [horror novelist H. P.] Lovecraft gave it persistent utterance in his writings—that some transfinite and superhuman power is marshaling its forces with intent to invade and take possession of this planet.… This is reminiscent of Charles Fort’s dark hints about a secret society on earth already in contact with cosmic beings and, perhaps, preparing the way for their advent. Crowley dispels the aura of evil with which these authors [Lovecraft and Fort] invest the fact; he prefers to interpret it thelemically, not as an attack upon human consciousness from within, [but] to embrace other stars and to absorb their energies into a system that is thereby enriched and rendered truly cosmic by the process.”



Occultist, magician, and author Aleister Crowley founded the religious philosophy of Thelema, an esoteric system with roots in ancient Egypt.

Adam Gorightly has more to say—and of a highly profound nature, too: "It was through the Amalantrah Working—which included the ingestion of hashish and mescaline in its rituals—that Crowley came into contact with an inter-dimensional entity named Lam, who by the way just happens to be a dead ringer for the popular conception of the Grey depicted on the cover of Whitley Strieber's Communion. Crowley called them 'Enochian entities' because he purportedly contacted them by using 'Enochian Call,' a Cabalistic system/language devised by 17th Century Elizabethan magician, Dr. John Dee.

"From this alleged encounter, some have inferred that the industrious Mr. Crowley intentionally opened a portal of entry through the practice of ritual magick, which allowed the likes of Lam and other 'alien greys' a passageway onto Earth plane. Dr. John Dee and his 'scryer,' Edward Kelly, had their own strange encounters with—as they call them—'little men' who moved about 'in a little fiery cloud,' thus a pattern exists in the lore of ritual magick connecting UFOs to sorcery."

Crowley is shown in this photo conducting a ceremony in religious garb. Some say he managed to open a gateway that allowed the Greys to arrive on Earth.

Gorightly continues in this vein: "Some now believe that what

Crowley tapped into was the same unconscious reservoir of high weirdness that helped launch the current rash of alien abductions, as reported by such 'experts' in the field as Budd Hopkins, John Mack, David Jacobs et al. When making these connections, bear in mind that many abductees recall their encounters with these grey skinned creatures only after they've been hypnotically regressed. Once again, we see that trance state—not unlike those produced during rituals such as the Amalantrah Working—are often the triggering factor which opens up a portal for these strange entities. According to Kenneth Grant, this tradition has been continued by current day adepts of the Great Beast, who follow in his footsteps practicing ritual magick to invoke these 'alien entities.'"

Indeed, in his book Outside the Circles of Time, Grant wrote: "Some believe that the UFO phenomena are part of the 'miracle,' and a mounting mass of evidence seems to suggest that mysterious entities have been located within the earth's ambience for countless centuries and that more and more people are being born with innate ability to see, or in some way sense their presence.… Prayer for deific intervention in ancient times has now become a cri de couere to extra-terrestrial or inter-dimensional entities, according to whether the manifestations are viewed as occurring within man's consciousness, or outside himself in apparently objective but often invisible entities. New Isis Lodge has in its archives the sigils of some of these entities. The sigils come from a grimoire of unknown origin which forms a part of the dark quabalahs of Besqul, located by magicians in the Tunnel of Quliefi. The grimoire describes Four Gates of extraterrestrial entry into, and emergence from, the known universe."

Adam Gorightly explains this further: "What Grant is speaking of is a form of ritual magick practiced by such groups as the Golden Dawn, and the Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.). 'Sigils' are

line-drawings and diagrams that serve as signatures of entities accessible to a trained magician familiar with ‘Enochian Calls’ and other methods of summoning ‘spirits.’ A grimoire is a directory of such sigils, and a manual for their use.”

CRYPTOTERRESTRIALS

Ever since the beginnings of recorded history, people have reported seeing strange and incredible vehicles in the skies of our planet. Millennia ago, they were perceived as phenomena of a supernatural kind, namely, the work of a god or multiple gods. Today, the extraterrestrial hypothesis is all-dominating. Also, a faction within the UFO research community believes that the UFO phenomenon is demonic in nature. Others suspect that our aliens might actually be time travelers from the future. However, what if an even stranger—and far more controversial—theory existed than all of those combined? What if the U.S. government knows all about it and has chosen to keep us all in the dark? It's a theory that many dismiss or haven't given much thought to—if, indeed, any thought. It's a theory that suggests that the UFO phenomenon has

at its heart not aliens—modern, ancient, or both—but an offshoot of the human race, which exists in distinct stealth. Sounds too bizarre to be true? Maybe not.

Over the course of millions of years, countless types of humans have existed—some of a protonature; others savage, hairy, and primitive; and more than a few that were highly evolved. Among those on the list are the Neanderthals, the Cro-Magnons, and, of course, us: Homo sapiens. However, what if another group of humans existed, one that has successfully managed to remain hidden—and off the grid, so to speak—for countless millennia, and to protect their real identities, they present themselves as space-faring aliens from faraway worlds—distant galaxies, even? Is such a theory possible? Does the U.S. government have a secret awareness that we share the planet with an ancient aspect of the human race? The evidence suggests that the government does indeed know.

One person who strongly suspected that the UFO phenomenon has its origins right here on Earth was the late Mac Tonnies, who died tragically in 2009 at the age of just thirty-four from heart disease. At the time of his death, Tonnies was busily putting the final touches on his book on the subject, which he titled The Cryptoterrestrials, which was published posthumously in 2010. Tonnies concluded that alien abductions, the abilities of the assumed E.T.s to breathe our air, and their concerns about nuclear war were all due to one fact: the aliens were from right here, and they always have been. I was fortunate enough to interview Tonnies just a few months before his passing, and he shared with me a wealth of fascinating data on his thoughts, suspicions, and

conclusions. Let's see what he had to say:

"After devouring countless books on the UFO controversy and the paranormal, I began to acknowledge that the extraterrestrial hypothesis suffered some tantalizing flaws. In short, the 'aliens' seemed more like surreal caricatures of ourselves than beings possessing the god-like technology one might plausibly expect from interstellar visitors. Like [UFO researcher] Jacques Vallée, I came to the realization that the extraterrestrial hypothesis isn't strange enough to encompass the entirety of occupant cases. But if we're dealing with humanoid beings that evolved here on earth, some of the problems vanish."

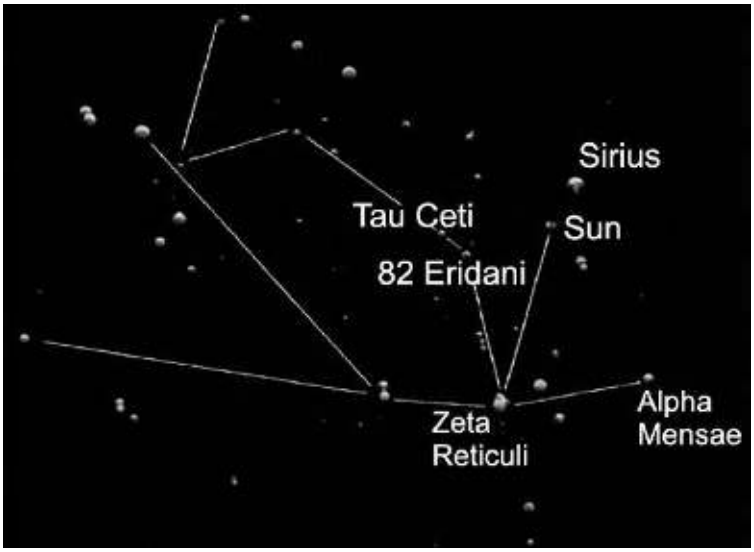
Tonnies continued: "I envision the cryptoterrestrials engaged in a process of subterfuge, bending our belief systems to their own ends. And I suggest that this has been occurring, in one form or another, for an extraordinarily long time. I think there's a good deal of folkloric and mythological evidence pointing in this direction, and I find it most interesting that so many descriptions of ostensible 'aliens' seem to reflect staged events designed to misdirect witnesses and muddle their perceptions."

During the course of his research into the cryptoterrestrial theory, Tonnies spent a great deal of time addressing the matter of alien abductions. For those who aren't fully aware of the nature of the phenomenon, a bit of background data is required.

Regardless of whether people believe or don't believe in the reality of the alien-abduction phenomenon, undoubtedly, the vast majority of people have heard of it. It was, however, a phenomenon that was pretty much unknown until September 19, 1961. Yes, a few earlier cases occurred, but for the most part, they were not publicized until after September 19. So, what exactly is so significant about that particular date? The answer is that it was the date of a now historic UFO event that happened to a married

couple from New Hampshire. They were Betty and Barney Hill.

At the time in question, the Hills were driving home from a vacation in Canada when the journey suddenly took on strange and unearthly proportions. It was on a dark stretch of road that the Hills caught sight of a curious light in the sky; it even seemed to be monitoring or shadowing them. They watched it for a while, then something really strange happened: the Hills became confused, experienced a sense of missing time—of several hours, no less—and after getting home suffered from weird and traumatic dreams; they were dreams that suggested that they may have been taken onboard the craft and even experimented on by weird-looking, humanoid figures. In no time at all, the dreams became definitive nightmares. Something had to be done, so it was.

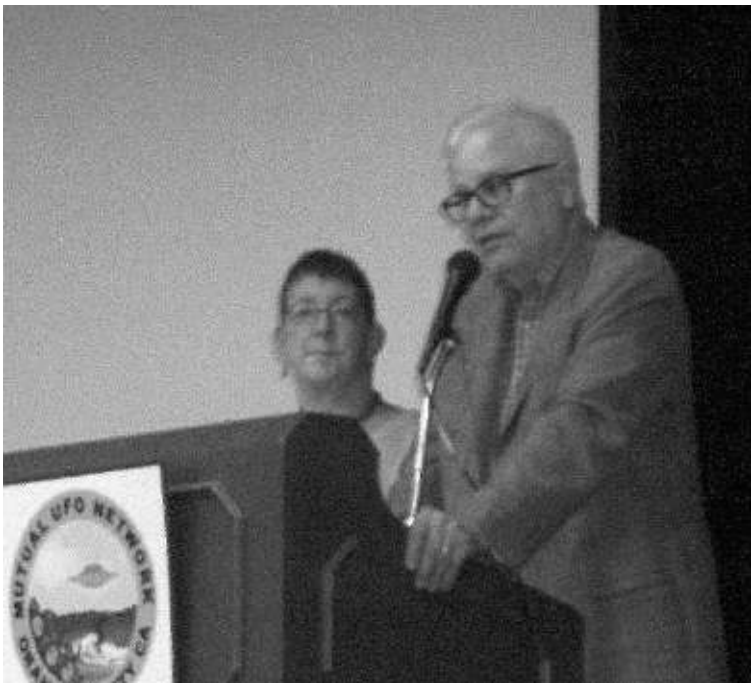


Betty and Barney Hill would claim that the aliens who abducted them were from the Zetal Reticuli system, indicated here on this chart based on testimony from Betty Hill and other abductees.

When things got really bad for the Hills and the nightmares and stress began to overwhelm them (Barney, for example, developed stomach ulcers), they sought help; it was a very good idea, as that same help led to answers to what happened on that

mystery-filled drive back to New Hampshire. They were put in touch with a neurologist and psychiatrist who operated out of Boston, Massachusetts, named Benjamin Simon. Clearly aware that the Hills were in deep states of anxiety, he elected to subject them to regressive hypnosis—with the permission of Betty and Barney, of course. What followed next can only be described as incredible. Both husband and wife told near-identical stories of being taken from their vehicle onto what can only be described as an unidentified flying object and subjected to a series of medical procedures—most of which were very intrusive and stressful. Frightening, even. The encounter went on for roughly two hours. So detailed were the memories of Betty and Barney that the time Benjamin Simon worked with the Hills went on for months.

Such was the phenomenal reaction to the story of Betty and Barney Hill, it prompted author John Fuller to write a book on the subject titled The Interrupted Journey—an appropriate title, indeed—which was published in 1966. Since then, the alien-abduction phenomenon has grown and spread like wildfire. We may never know for sure how many people believe they may have been kidnapped and experimented on by black-eyed, dwarfish beings from faraway galaxies. After all, not everyone wants publicity—particularly so not publicity of a very controversial type. In that sense, as many silent abductees may exist as publicly visible ones. To demonstrate the sheer level of experiences on record, though, it is worth noting that after Whitley Strieber's 1987 alien-abduction-themed book Communion was published, Strieber and his late wife, Anne, received letters from the public totaling no fewer than six figures. Other books, such as Budd Hopkins's Missing Time and Dr. John Mack's Passport to the Cosmos, have added to the controversy and given it more publicity.



Whitley Strieber and his late wife, Anne, are shown here at a MUFON conference. They have written both horror novels and nonfiction works about alien and cryptic beings.

As for what may be behind the abductions, certainly, the most controversial and widespread belief is that alien entities are engaged in a massive, covert program to create what may amount to untold numbers of alien– human hybrids. Some researchers and abductees believe that the outcome of the rise of the hybrids will be a positive one: the dawning of a new world filled with prosperity and peace. Dr. David Jacobs, though, concludes in his books The Threat and Walking Among Us that the hybrid issue is downright dangerous and that we are being infiltrated by aliens who, bit by bit, are infiltrating us with one goal in mind: complete control. The fact that many abductees believe that they have been implanted with devices that have an unclear agenda adds weight to the theory that the alien-abduction issue is a threat to both national security and the people of Earth.

However, what if a far more down-to-earth explanation

existed for the alien-abduction phenomenon? That question brings us back to Mac Tonnies: "I regard the alleged 'hybridization program' with skepticism. How sure are we that these interlopers are extraterrestrial? It seems more sensible to assume that the so-called aliens are human, at least in some respects. Indeed, descriptions of intercourse with aliens fly in the face of exobiological thought. If the cryptoterrestrial population is genetically impoverished, as I assume it is, then it might rely on a harvest of human genes to augment its dwindling gene-pool. It would be more advantageous to have us believe we're dealing with omnipotent extraterrestrials rather than a fallible sister species. The ET–UFO mythos may be due, in part, to a long-running and most successful disinformation campaign."

Tonnies then turned his attention to the claims of Antonio Villas Boas (see the "Clawed Aliens" chapter), a Brazilian lawyer who claimed that, in 1957, as a young man and while living on his family's farm at the time, he was abducted onto a UFO and had sex with a surprisingly hot-looking space babe. Tonnies said of Villas Boas's story: "After intercourse, the big-eyed succubus that seduced Antonio Villas Boas pointed skyward, implying a cosmic origin. But the mere fact that she appeared thoroughly female, and, moreover, attractive, belies an unearthly explanation. Further, one could argue that the clinical environment he encountered aboard the landed 'spacecraft' was deliberately engineered to reinforce his conviction that he was dealing with extraterrestrials.

"If cryptoterrestrials are using humans to improve their genetic stock, it stands to reason they've seen at least a few of our saucer movies. As consummate anthropologists, they likely know what we expect of 'real' extraterrestrials and can satisfy our preconceptions with a magician's skill. Their desire for our continued survival, if only for the sake of our genetic material,

may have played a substantial role in helping us to avoid extinction during the Cold War, when the UFO phenomenon evolved in our skies; much to the consternation of officialdom."

It is indeed a fact that in the early to late 1950s, countless people across the planet claimed close encounters with very human-looking aliens, who demanded that we lay down our atomic weapons lest we turn our planet into a radioactive wasteland all but bereft of life. Of course, this begs an important question: why would aliens from a planet in a star system who-knows-howmany light years away even care about what might happen—of a cataclysmic nature—in our world? Well, a good argument can be made that they wouldn't care. Why should they? However, if, as Tonnies suspected and suggested, the "aliens" are really cryptoterrestrials from right here, then their fears that we might destroy Earth become far more understandable: they are forced to share the planet with the most violent and destructive species imaginable: us. Tonnies says of what became known as the "Space Brothers":

"Commentators regularly assume that all the Contactees [a term for those who claimed encounters with human-like aliens, chiefly in the 1950s] were lying or else delusional. But if we're experiencing a staged reality, some of the beings encountered by the Contactees might have been real and the common messages of universal brotherhood could have been a sincere attempt to curb our destructive tendencies. The extraterrestrial guise would have served as a prudent disguise, neatly misdirecting our attention and leading us to ask the wrong questions; which we're still asking with no substantial results."

If aliens wish to use humans to create hybrids, then the likelihood that they wish to kill us all goes way down. After all, they need us as genetic stock.

When, in 2008, Tonnies began to talk and write publicly about the cryptoterrestrial theory, he got mixed responses from UFO researchers, as Tonnies himself admitted to me: "The cryptoterrestrial theory has met with mixed reactions. Some seem to think that I'm onto something. Most UFO researchers are, at best, extremely skeptical. Others think I'm parroting John Keel's 'superspectrum' [Keel was the author of the acclaimed 1975 book The Mothman Prophecies], a variation on the 'parallel worlds' theme that in turn shares memes with Jacques Vallée's 'multiverse.' Both ideas suggest that we somehow occupy dimensional space with our 'alien' visitors, doing away with the need for extraterrestrial spacecraft while helping explain the sense of

absurdity that accompanies many UFO and occupant sightings. Keel and Vallée have both ventured essentially 'occult' ideas in cosmological terms; both the 'superspectrum' and the 'multiverse' require a revision of our understanding of the way reality itself works. But the cryptoterrestrial hypothesis is grounded in a more familiar context."

The cryptoterrestrial hypothesis manages to alienate champions of the extraterrestrial hypothesis and those who support a more esoteric, "inter-dimensional" explanation.

Tonnies expanded: "I'm not suggesting unseen dimensions or the need for ufonauts to 'downshift' to our level of consciousness. Rather, I'm asking if it's feasible that the alleged aliens that occupy historical and contemporary mythology are flesh-and-blood human-like creatures that live right here on Earth. Not another version of Earth in some parallel Cosmos, but on Earth. While I can't automatically exclude the UFO phenomenon's 'paranormal' aspects, I can attempt to explain them in technological terms. For example, I see no damning theoretical reason why 'telepathy' and 'dematerialization' can't ultimately be explained by appealing to cybernetics, nano-technology and other fields generally excluded from ufological discourse."

He concluded: "The cryptoterrestrial hypothesis manages to alienate champions of the extraterrestrial hypothesis and those who support a more esoteric, 'inter-dimensional' explanation. It offers no clear-cut reconciliation. It does, however, wield explanatory potential lacking in both camps."

Echoing Tonnies's words are those of longtime UFO investigator Timothy Green Beckley, who has his own tale of the cryptoterrestrial kind to share:

"Some people might suggest that because the Space Brothers look so much like us that they could be from somewhere right here on Earth—an ancient race, maybe. There are a lot of cultural legends about advanced beings living underground: UFOs coming out of the oceans, lakes, caverns. The whole hollow-Earth thing is a little hard for me; but the caverns theory I can take.

"I remember one incident, 1970s, where I was lecturing and a gentleman—a professor at the college where I was lecturing—came up to me and told this story about how he was driving outside of a town in Michigan. It was rather late at night, and he saw these lights in the woods. He pulled over, and there was no other traffic coming in either direction; but there was already another car parked at the side of the road.

"He described seeing some sort of ship in the distance—a UFO. A group of human-like aliens got out, walked to the car, which was a Cadillac, or something like that. He watched them and could see they looked human. They just got in the car and drove off. But then, a couple of weeks later, he sees one of the same guys in a supermarket. These reports sound far-fetched; but there's so many of them of what seem to be aliens being able to move among us. But, if they're really from here, that might explain it."

Now we get to the issue of a U.S. government cover-up concerning the cryptoterrestrials.

While Mac Tonnies's admittedly intriguing theory was simply that—a theory—this story has an even more intriguing aspect, one that comes from a former employee of the U.S. government. He writes under the pen name of E. A. Guest. His real name is Walter Bosley, who served in both the U.S Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). He has revealed a startling story told to him by his father, who was also a respected figure within the U.S. military.

According to one witness who was involved in the Roswell incident, UFOs are not the work of extraterrestrials but, rather, of an advanced subterranean race.

In the 1950s, Bosley's father worked on various projects that would ultimately have a significant bearing upon the manned space program, including "training pilots in altitude chambers" and "flight medicine training." At one point in his career, Bosley's

father was ordered to attend a briefing at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. It was a briefing on none other than the legendary UFO crash outside of Roswell, New Mexico, in early July 1947. Despite what UFO researchers—and a sizeable amount of the public think—Bosley says that his father told him that nothing of an extraterrestrial nature crashed at Roswell on that fateful—and, for the crew, fatal—day. In Bosley Jr.'s very own words: "According to my father, these vehicles came from inside the planet. The civilization … exists in a vast, underground system of caverns and tunnels beneath the southwest and is human."

He continues: "Occasionally, they come and go, emerging in their vehicles and occasionally they crash. They are human in appearance, so much so that they can move among us with ease [and] with just a little effort. If you get a close look, you'd notice something odd, but not if the person just passed you on the street."

Significantly, Walter Bosley says: "I believe that the ET hypothesis has been used by the 'aliens' themselves, because it is most readily embraced by people who have had encounters with them."

Bosley's words bring us back to Mac Tonnies and his theories on the conspiracy-filled Roswell affair of July 1947.

In his 2009 book The Cryptoterrestrials, Tonnies speculated on the possibility that the Roswell craft was balloonlike and built, flown, and disastrously crashed by ancient humanoids that lurk in the depths of the planet. Controversial? Yes, but he made some interesting observations on this possibility. In Tonnies's own words:

"The device that crashed near Roswell in the summer of 1947,

whatever it was, featured properties at least superficially like the high-altitude balloon trains ultimately cited as an explanation by the Air Force. Debunkers have, of course, seized on the lack of revealingly 'high-tech' components found among the debris to dismiss the possibility that the crash was anything but a case of misidentification; not even Major Jesse Marcel, the intelligence officer who advocated an ET origin for the unusual foil and structural beams, mentioned anything remotely resembling an engine or power-plant."

Tonnies continued, in a fashion that emphasized that the cryptoterrestrials may not be as scientifically and technologically advanced as they might prefer us to think they are: "The cryptoterrestrial hypothesis offers a speculative alternative: maybe the Roswell device wasn't high-tech. It could indeed have been a balloon-borne surveillance device brought down in a storm, but it doesn't logically follow that it was one of our own. Upon happening across such a troubling find, the Air Force's excessive secrecy begins to make sense."

Regardless of what you, me, or indeed any number of the well-known Roswell researchers/authors—such as Bill Moore, Kevin Randle, Stan Friedman, or Don Schmitt—might think or conclude, the fact is that Tonnies's cryptoterrestrial theory is probably the only one that allows for the Roswell crash site to have been comprised of very unusual, non-Homo sapiens but, at the same time, incredibly simplistic technology.

The alien theory should, of course, require highly advanced technology to have been recovered—yet, we hear very little on this matter aside from talk of fields full of foil-like material with curious properties. Accounts of the military coming across alien-created "power-plants" and "engines"—as Tonnies described them—are curiously absent from the Roswell affair. It's that afore-

mentioned foil and not much else.

Perhaps, Tonnies was indeed on the right track when it came to Roswell. Maybe, Walter Bosley, who still pursues the story, is still on the right track, and just perhaps, it was the Roswell affair that—quite out of the blue—led the U.S. military to realize, to both its amazement and its fear, that we are not the only species of human on the planet, and in the process, a huge coverup was initiated to ensure that the world never gets to know the true story of Roswell's cryptoterrestrials.

DEMONS THAT ARE EXTRATERRESTRIAL

In 1989, a man named Bob Lazar came out of the shadows, claiming that he had briefly worked at the almost legendary Area 51, situated deep in the deserts of Nevada. Lazar, a physicist, claimed that while employed at the base, he had access to alien spacecraft and highly classified files on what the U.S. government knew about aliens. Although Lazar's story has been scrutinized by UFO researchers for the last three decades, one issue doesn't get the attention that it really should. It's a part of Lazar's story that takes things down a path that is filled with disturbing revelations involving the afterlife—and even alien demons that wish to steal our souls. One of the many briefing papers that Lazar said he read at S-4 stated that the aliens refer to us as what we would call

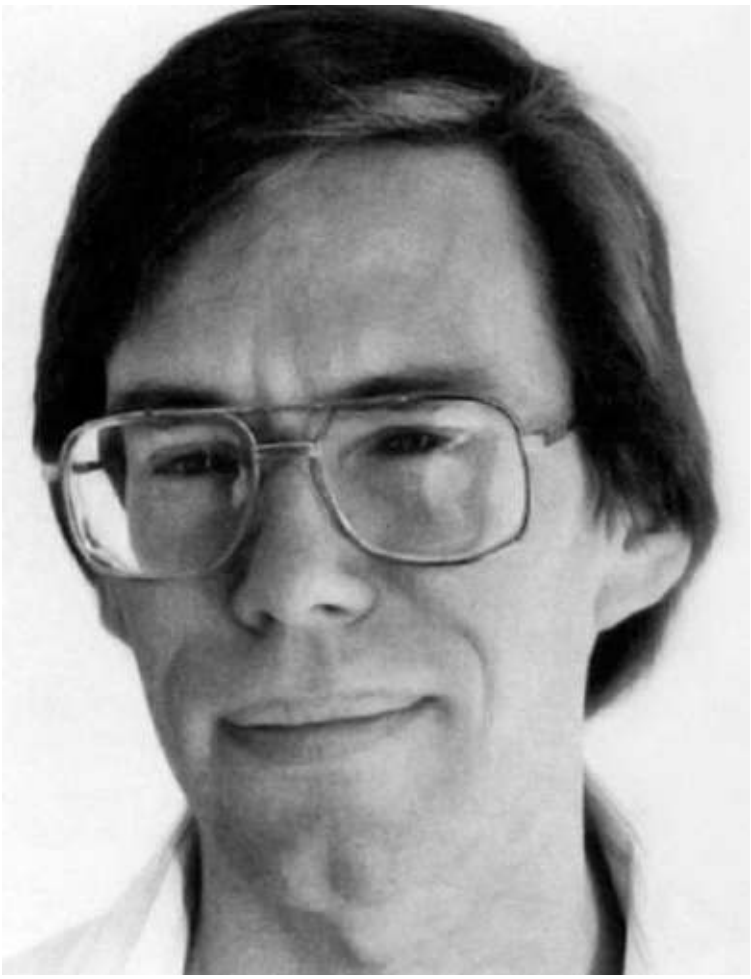
“containers”—but containers of what? Well, that’s where things get really controversial. Lazar told KLAS-TV’s George Knapp that “religion was created so we have some rules and regulations for the sole purpose of not damaging the containers.”

An awkward conversation followed that saw Knapp pressing for answers and Lazar almost squirming because of the nightmarish nature of the story. That’s hardly surprising because the claimed big secret is that the aliens have an interest in the human soul. Worse, though, they allegedly use the human soul in a way that the U.S. government doesn’t fully understand—or, the government does know but does not know how to tell the world the awful truth. One of the theories is truly terrifying: the aliens “feed” on the human soul, on our life force. In this scenario, Earth is a farm, and we are the cattle. Upon our deaths, our souls are reaped, and the life energy sustains the aliens. Far out? Definitely, but Lazar stands by what he read in those briefing papers. The soul angle has led some UFO researchers to believe that the aliens are nothing of the sort. Rather, the theory is that they are high-tech demons; it’s an issue we will come to shortly.

George Knapp was not the only person who Bob Lazar spoke to on this issue of containers. Michael Lindemann is the author of a 1995 book called UFOs and the Alien Presence. He also questioned Lazar on the controversy-dominated aspect of the story of Lazar and Area 51. Lazar added a bit more to the story when speaking with Lindemann, as the latter acknowledged in his book. He noted that Lazar said that the containers were “extremely, extremely unique,” that they were “very difficult to find,” and that the biggest secret of all revolved around our souls. No wonder the people in the know at Area 51 didn’t know how to tell the rest of the world the story they were forced to sit on out of fear of worldwide anarchy breaking out if it was revealed that religion

was a creation of ancient extraterrestrials who devour our souls.

Probably, the one person more than any other who concludes that alien presence is on our planet is Nigel Kerner. He has written two books on the subject. They are Song of the Greys and Grey Aliens and the Harvesting of Souls. Combined, they make a worryingly persuasive argument for the theory that aliens somehow "use" the human soul. Danielle Silverman, Kerner's assistant, prepared the following for me on his theories and conclusions. She stated that Kerner "went on to delineate a fascinating concept, explaining that a 'soul' might be a derivational information field that comes out of a natural cadence that came into the Universe with the big bang. This field holds the power to maintain information in what he called a morphogenetic electro-spatial field with an eternal scope of existence in whatever form circumstance allows. The soul is thus an ancestrally contiguous and coherent mechanism for holding information.



Bob Lazar, a scientist who worked at Area 51 and said he knew what went on there, theorized that human beings' souls were being harvested by alien demons.

"Nigel argued that if the Greys are an artificially created and manufactured roboidal form then they would find our facility for 'soul' an analogue of their own creators. This would be an analogue that they would want to try to combine with their own natures themselves. The 'Greys,' he argued, were synthetic biological programmed artificially intelligent machine entities sent out as super intelligent robots far more advanced than those we now ourselves send out to explore the Universe.

"They are, however, subject to wear and tear as indeed are all atomically derived entities through the second law of

thermodynamics which drives them into greater and greater states of decay with time. A nonatomic property however, such as 'soul,' is immune to the second law. Thus, this property was their ultimate goal, their 'holy grail,' so to speak. It was a property that they could never know or understand in its own terms as purely atomic artificial creations. Their only perception of it was the effect it has on atoms, the difference in other words between a naturally living entity and their artificial state.

"Ironically, what these artificially intelligent entities are seeking is eternal survivability. The Greys, and any physical life that they might reconstitute from the DNA codes they carry on behalf of their creators, cannot access the state beyond death. They have no 'soul'; they cannot be born. They are trying to use us as a bridge into 'soul' writing their programs into us through genetic engineering and implantation so that through us they can tap into an eternal existence."

It's notable that far more than a few people in the field of alien abductions have commented on this soul-reaping program of the aliens. Whitley Strieber, the author of a 1987 best-selling book, Communion, came to believe that the human soul was an integral part of the abduction experience; he concluded that the visitors had the ability to manipulate the soul, even to recycle it into newborns.

Whitley Strieber is not the only writer-researcher on the alien abduction issue to have made a deep connection between the phenomenon and the human soul. Another was the late Dr. John E. Mack, a Harvard University professor who was killed by a drunk driver in London, England, in 2004. Mack wrote two books on the subject: Abduction and Passport to the Cosmos. One of Mack's

many patients was a man named Greg. He told Mack of an experience of the abduction type—but not with the typical small, large-headed, blackeyed aliens that have become known as the Greys. No, Greg's encounter was with tall, scaly creatures that resembled the monster in Universal Studios' classic movie of 1954, The Creature from the Black Lagoon. In UFO terminology, they are known as the Reptilians. Greg confided in Mack that he felt that the lizard people he encountered were trying to extract his soul from his physical body. Another of Mack's patients, Isabel, talked of aliens that can "fool you into handing over" your soul.

One abductee named Greg said the aliens didn't look like Greys; they looked more like the Creature from the Black Lagoon (pictured).

It's also worth noting the experience of Sergeant John Healey of the U.S. Army Reserve. On the night of October 18, 1973, he encountered a brightly lit UFO as he and his colleagues were on board a UH-1H helicopter rapidly closing in on Cleveland Hopkins Airport in Ohio. In the aftermath of the encounter, which, in essence, was a near-collision between the two craft, Healey had several weird, out-of-body experiences, he told UFO investigator Jennie Zeidman. It was, he explained, as if he were dead in his bed and that his spirit was above him, staring down at his sleeping form in the bed. The fact that Sergeant Healey's experiences occurred not in relation to the abduction phenomenon but to a UFO sighting suggests that other components of the UFO issue come into play when it comes to the relationship between UFOs, life after death, and our souls. Notably, several members of the helicopter crew were later contacted by representatives of the Department of Defense, who exhibited interest in—and deep concerns about—the UFO/soul-ingestion angle. This suggests a disturbing scenario: that certain elements of the U.S. government may know something of the origins and agenda of the paranormal parasites. In fact, as we'll now see, that's exactly how it seems: Uncle Sam may know all about these menacing, energy-eating entities that intrude upon our world.

Ray Boeche is both a priest and a former state director (for Nebraska) of the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON). He believes that the UFO phenomenon has demonic—rather than extraterrestrial—origins. In November 2001, Boeche met two physicists working on a classified program buried deep in the heart of the Department of Defense. The story told to Boeche revolved around attempts on the part of the people in that same program to contact what they

termed "Non-Human Entities." Some of us might call them aliens. Others, though, might suggest that they are demons. I interviewed Boeche extensively about the story. If the story is true and Boeche was not the subject of a disinformation program, it's mind-blowing and horrifying.

Boeche said, "I found it interesting because they had contacted me at work; and I have no idea how they tracked me down there. But, they wanted to know if we could get together and have lunch to discuss something important. I met them for a brief period of time on that first meeting, and then they said: 'We'd like to get together and have a longer conversation.' I arranged a time and it was quite a lengthy discussion, probably three and a half hours. And that's how it all came about.

"After both meetings, when I was able to verify that the men held the degrees they claimed to hold, and were apparently who they claimed to be, I was intrigued and excited at the possibility of having stumbled on a more-or-less-untouched area which could be researched. But I was also cautious in terms of 'why me?'

"I had no way of knowing before our face-to-face meeting if there was any legitimacy to this at all. I wasn't given any information at all before our meeting, just the indication that they were involved in areas of research I would find interesting, and that they had some concerns they wished to discuss with me. Both men were physicists. I'd guess they were probably in their early-to-mid fifties, and they were in a real moral dilemma. Both of them were Christians and were working on a Department of Defense project that involved trying to contact the NHEs. In fact, this was described to me as an 'obsessive effort.' And part of this effort was to try and control the NHEs and use their powers in military weapons applications and in intelligence areas, such as remote-viewing and psychotronic weapons.

“They came to believe that the NHEs were not extraterrestrial at all; they believed they were some sort of demonic entities. And that regardless of how benevolent or beneficial any of the contact they had with these entities seemed to be, it always ended up being tainted, for lack of a better term, with something that ultimately turned out to be bad. There was ultimately nothing positive from the interaction with the NHE entities. They felt it really fell more under the category of some vast spiritual deception instead of UFOs and aliens. In the course of the whole discussion, it was clear that they really viewed this as having a demonic origin that was there to simply try and confuse the issue in terms of who they were, what they wanted, and what the source of the ultimate truth is. If you extrapolate from their take that these are demons in the biblical sense of the word, then what they would be doing here is trying to create a spiritual deception to fool as many people as possible.

“From what they told me, it seemed like someone had invoked something and it opened a doorway to let these things in. That’s certainly the impression they gave me. I was never able to get an exact point of origin of these sorts of experiments, or of their involvement, and when they got started. But I did get the impression that because of what they knew and the information that they presented, they had been involved for at least several years, even if the project had gone on for much longer. They were concerned that they had undertaken this initially with the best of intentions, but then as things developed they saw a very negative side to it that wasn’t apparent earlier. So, that’s what leads me to think they had a relatively lengthy involvement.

Ray Boeche met with two men from the U.S. Department of Defense who had come to the conclusion that Non-Human Entities (NHEs) were demonic in origin.

"Most of it was related to psychotronic weaponry and remote viewing, and even deaths by what were supposed to be psychic methods. The project personnel were allowed to assume they had somehow technologically mastered the ability to do what the NHEs could do: remote-viewing and psychotronics. But, in actuality, it was these entities doing it all the time, or allowing it to happen, for purposes that suited their deception. With both psychotronic weapons and remote-viewing, I was told that the DoD had not really mastered a technology to do that at all; they were allowed by the NHEs to think that this is what they had done. But the NHEs were always the causal factor.

“They showed me a dozen photos of three different people—four photos of each person, who had apparently been killed by these experiments. These were all post-mortem photographs, taken in-situ, after the experiments. The areas shown in all of the photographs were like a dentist’s chair or a barber’s chair, and the bodies were still in those positions, sitting in the chairs. Still there, with EEG and EKG leads coming off of them. They were all wired. It was a very clinical setting, and there was no indication of who they were. It was a very disturbing sort of thing. And I’m thinking in the back of my mind: if these are real, who would they have gotten for these experiments? Were they volunteers? Were they some sort of prisoners? I have no idea. Were they American? Were they foreign? There was no way to tell.

“They had read some of my stuff, and they knew that I’d become a pastor and that I had a Christian viewpoint from which I could examine these things. And they were concerned morally and ethically that they had allowed themselves to be duped into doing this research, and it had taken such a turn. My concern was always that: Why come to me? Who am I? I can’t do anything for you. I’m happy to evaluate it as best I can, but if you have this concern, why not go to a Christian leader with a lot more clout and public visibility than I’ve got? But that was their reason: they were aware of the research I had done on a lot of things, that I could approach it from a Christian viewpoint, and that it was more of a moral dilemma for them. They wanted the information out there. But, to me, I have to think: is any of this accurate? On one hand, is this a way to throw disinformation out? But, on the other hand, I think that even if they wanted to just spread disinformation, they could have done it with someone a lot more influential than me.

“I’ve been involved in this since 1965 and this is the most bizarre stuff I’ve ever run across. I didn’t know what to make of it

then and I don't know what to make of it now."

Whatever one makes of all this, undoubtedly, this thread of demonic aliens and soul stealing can be found here, there, and everywhere—if one looks carefully. Lazar, rather uncomfortably, it must be said, described it to both George Knapp and Michael Lindemann, claiming that the U.S. government—or, at least, those working on the projects at Area 51—knew of this link between the UFO phenomenon and the human soul. Whitley Strieber has written extensively about the soul/afterlife aspect of the UFO mystery. The late Dr. John Mack had in his files a significant number of reports of aliens manipulating the human soul.

Is this Area 51's biggest secret, that our souls amount to a form of sustenance, which are digested at the point of our deaths? If the answer is yes, it's no wonder that those in the know at Area 51 don't want the story getting out. Undoubtedly, worldwide chaos would break out. The result: the secret remains hidden at S-4, a secret that is too terrifying to reveal.

DIANA OF VENUS

Although the vast majority of all the so-called contactee encounters in the 1950s were with male entities—the Space Brothers, as they became known—some were with female entities. They did, of course, become known as the Space Sisters. One of them was an alleged alien named Diana, who had repeated encounters with a contactee named Dana Howard. Regan Lee is a UFO researcher who has spent a great deal of time looking into the claims of Howard. Lee provides the following: "While I'm intrigued by the Contactees in general, and realize there are many perspectives and theories surrounding 'what really happened,' I'd like to focus on the symbolic [aspect] of Howard's experience, rather than attempt to prove or disprove her experience. What stood out for me as I read about Dana Howard's accounts were the

similarities to Marian Apparitions. Howard's experiences seemed to be a blend of space-age Contactee encounters, complete with flying saucers, and some of the characteristics of appearances of the Virgin Mary."

Dana Howard said that the first encounter with Diana took place in the final year of the 1940s: "Still wrapped in the warm intoxication of the spirit, my vision was directed to a gnarled, old tree overlooking the antediluvian hills. Leaning casually against the grotesque trunk was a woman being of unsurpassed loveliness. Her head was radiant with a crown of fire, strands of golden hair cascading gently over her beautiful, slightly olive-tinted shoulders. The strange mystic light flooding her dark, prophetic eyes, added a wistful something to all her other charms."

Lee says this is "similar in ways to reports of seeing the entity, Mary." However, adds Lee, "the sighting turns space-age." Indeed, it does.

The alien woman was discovered leaning against an old, gnarled tree. Her beauty was radiant, unsurpassed.

Howard also saw "a beautiful rocket-shaped ship suspended in mid-air about three hundred feet from the earth.… In the main it seemed to be constructed of some sort of translucent materials, but trimmed in gold, and gem-studded. An almost invisible 'ladder' extended from the ship to the earth, and I obediently followed the radiant being up the filmy stairs without questioning. Once aboard, my sacrosanct companion vanished, and I never saw her again."

She was never seen again until the midfifties when, as Lee reveals, "Sixteen years after the first encounter, Diane the Venusian appeared for the second time, this time during a séance. The

séance was conducted by a well-known medium at the time, Reverend Bertie Lillie Candler, in Los Angeles, California. An eight-foot-tall female figure, described as being very beautiful, appeared before them."

Lee expands on the story: "The female entity said she was the same Diane from Venus that Dana had met sixteen years ago and was responsible for giving Dana telepathic messages during that time. Like most of the other good-looking humanoid beings of the Contactee era, she imparted messages of the importance of spiritual growth, transformation of both body and psyche, and eventual life on Venus."

"My daughter," Howard was told by her alien friend, "always remember—without inner perfection there can be no outer perfection. There must be perfect balance between the realm of spirit and the realm of materiality."

Howard continued with an incredible story: "Reverend Bertie Lillie Candler, proclaimed by many as the greatest physical medium of the world, was holding a private séance at the Church of Divine Light, 837 South Parkview Street, Los Angeles, California. I had never attended a materialization séance before, and my inquiring mind asked all sorts of questions. As my cerebral atoms whirled with curiosity toward the close of the meeting, the 'little white church' seemed to me electrified with a powerful vibration.

"Then, some ten or twelve feet from the draped-off area where Reverend Candler was in deep trance, I saw a rising glow of phosphorescence. It was very tall at first, but out of this phosphorescent substance a form began to manifest itself. She was definitely different from the other 'spirit' manifestations, a solid, fleshly being, delicate in charm and manner.

"She called for Dana. Overwhelmed with emotion I could not choke back. I went up to her, standing only inches away from the manifestation. While I did not recognize her instantly, I knew there was something quaintly familiar about her. Standing like a sylph-like goddess, and bowing low in greeting to the twenty-seven persons present, the rich tones of her voice vibrated through the little church."

A woman by the name of Lucile Points, who was also there, stated: "A beautiful, fleshly being came, rather hesitantly at first, then saying, 'I am Diane. I come from Venus.' Since I was sitting next to the draped-off place, I greeted this beautiful one asking: 'With whom do you wish to speak?' She replied softly: 'I wish to speak with Dana.'"

Howard revealed that others knew of the affair, too: "On April 29, 1955, the writer, Mrs. Gladys Campbell, and my friend, Mrs. Maude Haas, attended a materialization séance at the Church … the medium being Reverend Bertie Lillie Candler of Florida.…"

Campbell said: "I am more than happy to give an account of what I witnessed to the best of my recollection; and you will recall, when you spoke at the Pyramid Church in Alhambra the following Sunday after the visit, I was the one who got up and verified your statements concerning the visit of Diane. It was truly a marvelous thing to be present and see for myself such a wonderful personality, and I know you must be very humble and gratified to have the facts that you brought before the public in your book, My Flight to Venus, substantiated in such an unexpected manner."

Lee takes the story further: "It's interesting Diane said she came from Venus; for Venus, of course, is the planet representing the female sex, fertility, beauty, love. It is the morning and the evening star." Diane most certainly did provide Howard with messages of love:

“Child of Earth,” Diane stated, “try to listen through space for the voice of one who has not forgotten. Try to make every breath a breath of love. Try to make every word a word of love. Make every act an act of love. To do so, is to love and be loved. When you find the great jewel of love in your heart, you will find also, as you walk down the streets of life, the good and the noble in every soul you meet.”

Earth’s sister planet, Venus, is an inhospitable place, where it is so hot that lead melts on its surface. Yet this is the planet that Diana said was her home.

Lee had more to say: “The name Diane, a form of Diana, means the Divine. So we have a Divine Love from the heavens, appearing to an earthling with messages of love, creativity, and the need for constructive transformation; raising the self up to a higher vibration. The symbolism in these encounters is interesting. Was it a true encounter with an alien? Or the same presence that is

manifest in appearances of the Virgin Mary? It is interesting the experience took place during a séance, a perfect setting for manifestations of all kinds of spirits and entities, including some part of Dana Howard herself that was Diane. We don't know, and probably never will know, if Dana Howard's experiences were some kind of liminal, paranormal experience, or if she made the whole thing up."

Lee is careful to note: "Whatever 'really' happened, the Dana Howard encounter is certainly a highly interesting case."

The final words on this particularly intriguing case go to contactee expert Greg Bishop: "In the heavily male-dominated world of 1950s America, Howard stands out in a field where Contactees often lingered on descriptions of their encounters with shapely space babes."

DOGMEN ON THE LOOSE

Since 1991, the Wisconsin town of Elkhorn has been the lair and hunting ground of a terrifying creature that is the closest thing one can imagine to a real-life werewolf, and, just maybe, that's exactly what it is. The monster has become known as the Beast of Bray Road—on account of the fact that many of the initial sightings were made on that particular road. Without doubt, the expert on all things of a lycanthropic nature in Wisconsin is author and journalist Linda Godfrey, who has penned half a dozen books on werewolves and who I interviewed about her research into this malignant beast. She told me a fascinating story, which suggests that the Dogman—as today's werewolf is termed—may be extraterrestrial in origin. An alien wolfman? Maybe so, as you will soon see. Godfrey says: "The story first came to my attention in

about 1991 from a woman who had heard rumors going around here in Elkhorn, and particularly in the high school, that people had been seeing something like a werewolf, a wolf-like creature, or a wolf-man. They didn't really know what it was. But some were saying it was a werewolf. And the werewolf tag has just gotten used because I think that people really didn't know what else to call it.

"I started checking it out. I talked to the editor of The Week newspaper here, and which I used to work for. He said, 'Why don't you check around a little bit and see what you hear?' This was about the end of December. And being a weekly newspaper that I worked for, we weren't really hard news; we were much more feature oriented. So, I asked a friend who had a daughter in high school and she said, 'Oh yeah, that's what everybody's talking about.' So, I started my investigations and got one name from the woman who told me about it. She was also a part-time bus driver.

Journalist Linda Godfrey has conducted interviews with people who speculate that werewolves—Dogmen—are another form of extraterrestrial.

"In my first phone call to the bus driver, she told me that she had called the County Animal Control Officer. So, of course, when you're a reporter, anytime you have a chance to find anything official that's where you go. I went to see him and, sure enough, he had a folder in his file drawer that he had actually marked Werewolf, in a tongue-in-cheek way.

"People had been phoning in to him to say that they had seen something. They didn't know what it was. But from their descriptions, that's what he had put. So, of course, that made it a news story. When you have a public official, the County Animal

Control Officer, who has a folder marked Werewolf, that's news. It was very unusual.

"It just took off from there and I kept finding more and more witnesses. At first, they all wanted to stay private, and I remember talking about it with the editor and we thought we would run the story because it would be over in a couple of weeks. The story was picked up by Associated Press. Once it hit AP, everything broke loose, and people were just going crazy. All the Milwaukee TV stations came out and did stories, dug until they found the witnesses, and got them to change their minds and go on camera, which some of them later regretted. And which I kind of regret, because it really made them reluctant, and kind of hampered the investigation.

"They were all mostly saying that they had seen something which was much larger than normal, sometimes on two legs and sometimes on four, with a wolfish head. Some described it as a German shepherd-like head, pointed ears, very long, coarse, shaggy, and wild-looking fur. One thing they all mentioned was that it would turn and look at them and gaze fearlessly or leer at them, and it was at that point that they all got really frightened. Everybody who has seen it—with the exception of one—has been extremely scared because it's so out of the ordinary. It was something they couldn't identify and didn't appear to be afraid of them. It would just casually turn around and disappear into the brush. It was never just out in the open where it didn't have some sort of hiding place. There was always a cornfield or some brush or some woods. So, that was pretty much the start of it.

"Once that got out, I started finding other people who called me and got in touch with me and I sort of became the unofficial clearinghouse. And we called it the Beast of Bray Road because I've always been reluctant to call it a werewolf. The original

sightings were in an area known as Bray Road, which is outside of Elkhorn.

"Everybody seems to have an opinion about this that they are eager to make known and defend. I personally don't think there are enough facts for anybody to come to a conclusion. I have a couple of dozen sightings, at least. A few of them are second-hand and they date back to 1936. And they aren't all around Bray Road. Quite a number are in the next county, Jefferson. I've had a woman write me who insists it's a wolf. And I think a lot of people subscribe to that theory; yes, it's definitely a wolf and can't be anything else. But that doesn't explain the large size.

"We've had all sorts of theories—mental patients escaping or some crazy guy running around. A hoaxer is another theory—that it's somebody running around in a werewolf suit. One or two could have been that, but I tend to have my doubts about that, because the incidents are isolated and not close together. One of the sightings was on Halloween, but that's also one of the people who got a really good look at it and they're sure it wasn't a human in a costume. Otherwise, most of them have been in really remote locations where, if you were going to hoax, the person would have to have been sitting out there in the cold just waiting for somebody to come along. So, if it's a hoaxer, my hat's off to them. But I tend not to think that's the case. I don't rule it out completely because once publicity gets out, things like that can happen.

"Two hunters quite a bit farther north saw what looked like two 'dog children' standing up in the woods. They were too scared to shoot when they saw them. They were not tall; they were juvenile-looking, standing upright, which is what scared them. But, otherwise, it's a single creature. Most of the sightings I receive aren't recent, and so people can't remember too well what the moon was like. But most of the sightings occur around the fall

when the cornfields get big and there's really good hiding cover. So, that's anywhere from late August through November. And I've had some sightings from the spring. But there are other theories as well for what is going on.

"Occasionally I'll get letters from people who say they are lycanthropes themselves and their theory is that this is an immature, real werewolf and it cannot control its transformation, and that's why it allows itself to be seen occasionally. They are completely convinced of that. And there are people who believe it's a manifestation of satanic forces, that it's a part of a demonic thing. They point to various occult activities around here. There are also people who try to link it to UFOs. Then there's the theory it's just a dog. One woman, a medium, thought that it was a natural animal but didn't know what it was. And there are a lot of people out here that do wolf-hybridizations, and I've thought to myself you'd get something like that. But that doesn't explain the upright posture. Then there's the theory that it's a creature known as the Windigo or Wendigo, which is featured in Indian legends and is supposedly a supernatural creature that lives on human flesh. But none of the descriptions from the Windigo legends describe a creature with canine features.

An illustration of a Wendigo, a creature from Algonquin legend that is an evil spirit.

"There's another possibility: I think a lot of these people are seeing different things. And that when they heard somebody else talk about something, there's a tendency to say, 'Oh, that must be what I saw.' There's really no way to know. And there are differences in some of the sightings. I've had people ask me, 'Are you sure this isn't Bigfoot?' Most of the sightings really don't sound like what people report as Bigfoot. But a couple of them do. There's one man who saw it in the 1960s in a different area of the county, who insists positively that he saw a Bigfoot, but doesn't want anyone saying he saw a werewolf. And the terrain around here isn't really the typical sort of Bigfoot terrain of forests where people usually report these things. We do have woods and a big state forest, but it's a narrow band of forest. It's a lot of prairie and

is not what you would think a Bigfoot would live in. But you never know. I've also had the baboon theory, which I find extremely unlikely."

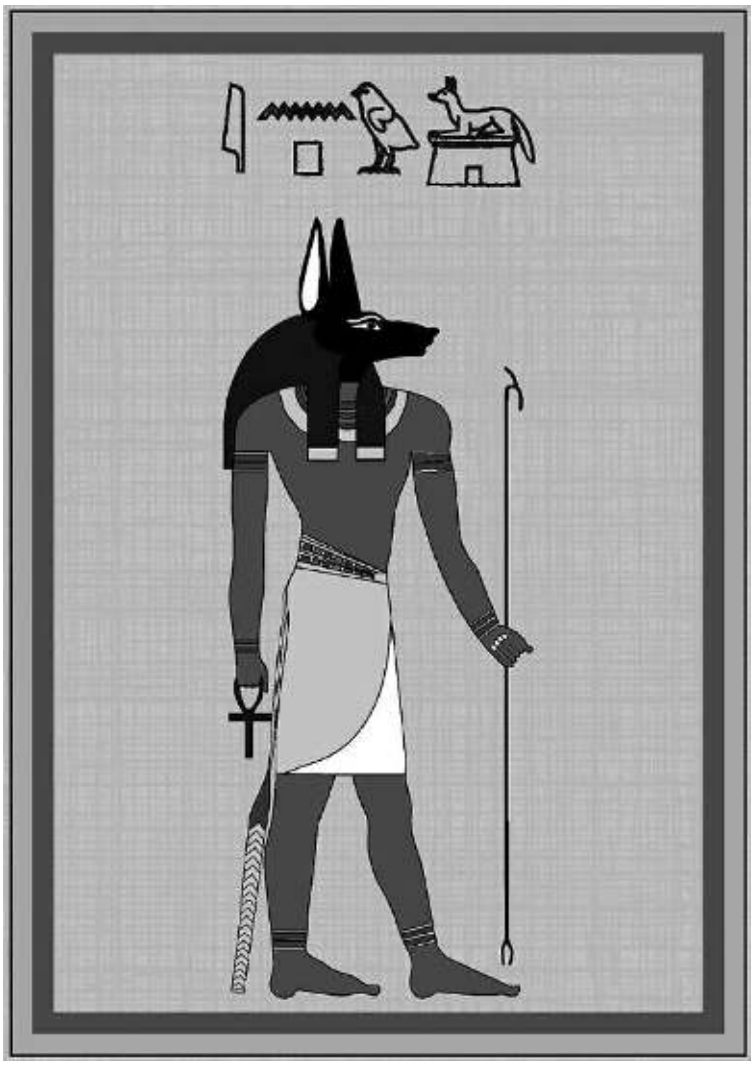
Of her first book on the subject, The Beast of Bray Road, Godfrey said to me: "Part of the angle of the book is looking at this as a sociological phenomenon and how something that a number of people see turns into a legend. And it has become that, a little bit. Personally, I'm still happy to leave it an open mystery. I don't have a feeling that it has to be pinned down."

A quarter of a century after her investigations into the mystery of the Beast of Bray Road began, Linda Godfrey's writing and research continues, and the sightings of the unearthly monster continue. Her published works now include The Beast of Bray Road; Werewolves; Hunting the American Werewolf; The Michigan Dogman; and Real Wolfmen. Collectively, they demonstrate something incredible: werewolves may not be creatures of fantasy, legend, and mythology. They just might be all too real—and Bray Road may be just the place to see them.

Now let's take a look at the theory that the Dogmen are alien creatures rather than unknown, terrestrial animals or something of a supernatural nature. In 2005, Linda Godfrey was contacted by a man—a military whistle-blower, we might very well say—who was an expert in the field of remote viewing. Essentially, remote viewing is a process that allows the mind to psychically travel to just about here, there, and everywhere. Astral travel, one might say. According to Godfrey's Edward Snowden-like source, the U.S. government has uncovered data suggesting that the Dogmen are a very ancient, alien race that closely resembles the equally

ancient deity of the Underworld, Anubis. Godfrey's informant also discovered—via remote viewing—that the Dogmen can "jump" from location to location via portals or doorways in the fabric of space and time. Crystalinks states of Anubis:

"Anubis is the Egyptian name for a jackal-headed god associated with mummification and the afterlife in Egyptian mythology. In the ancient Greek language, Anubis is known as Inpu (variously spelled Anupu, lenpw, etc.). The oldest known mention of Anubis is in the Old Kingdom pyramid texts, where he is associated with the burial of the king. At this time, Anubis was the most important god of the Dead but he was replaced during the Middle Kingdom by Osiris. He takes various names in connection with his funerary role, such as He who is upon his mountain, which underscores his importance as a protector of the deceased and their tombs, and the title He who is in the place of embalming, associating him with the process of mummification."



Anubis, the god of the dead in Egyptian mythology, was half man and half jackal.

One of the lesser-known aspects of the Dogman phenomenon is that which connects it to the Men in Black and the Women in Black, both of which have extraterrestrial origins, as the relevant chapters in this book demonstrate. Cases are on record in which witnesses to—and investigators of—the Dogmen have been visited by WIB and MIB and warned not to talk about their encounters. Granted, the number of cases is small—I have just six—but when

compared to each other, a pattern definitely emerges. One of the cases comes from none other than Linda Godfrey herself. In the first weekend of August 2016, I spoke at Ken Gerhard's Dogman Symposium in the city of Defiance, Ohio, which was the site of numerous werewolf/Dogman sightings back in 1972. It was during a break at the Dogman Symposium that Linda briefly mentioned her odd story to me, a story that she went on to expand as follows:

There was a bit of exoticness to her. It was such an odd thing; it was out of the ordinary and stuck in my mind.

"It was around 2003, a sunny and warm day, and I happened to be out on Hospital Road, which is just off Bray Road, and where a lot of sightings of Dogmen have taken place—on that particular juncture of the road. There were a couple of cameramen and two colleagues of mine that were with me, and we were all being filmed for a TV show. It was the turn of one of my colleagues to be filmed. The other one and I were just standing at the side of the road—waiting and seeing what was going on—when this very large, black sedan pulled up. And as the window came down, there was an older woman in the car. Nobody that I knew. We looked at her as the window came down and she said, in an accent that sounded kind of like a Russian accent, but could have been eastern European, I'm not sure: 'Do you need any help?'

"There was something about her mannerisms: it wasn't as if she was tentative or worried about anything. She just stated this in a really almost commanding way. And my friend and I looked at

each other and we just said: ‘Thank you, no; we’re just filming.’ And it was like she didn’t really understand what we she said, because she said again: ‘Do you need any help? Can I help you?’ We said, ‘No, thanks,’ again. She still didn’t drive away; she looked over at the cameraman who was filming the activity and she seemed a little reluctant to leave. But, there wasn’t any great reason she could think of to justify staying. So, she finally turned and stepped on the gas kind of slowly. And that was it. But, it just struck me as so strange at the time. She was dressed in black, but it wasn’t a formal business suit or anything like that. The car was black and the interior was kind of dark. I would estimate she was probably in her sixties and she had a deep voice. Her hair was grayish and pulled back. There was a bit of exoticness to her. It was such an odd thing; it was out of the ordinary and stuck in my mind. She didn’t fit in with the local populace, put it that way.”

Of course, those of a skeptical nature would likely be inclined to say that this was simply a case of a woman in a black car taking an interest in a TV shoot rather than an incident involving a definitive Woman in Black. I should stress, though, that in the other cases I have on file—where witnesses saw the Dogmen and were then visited by a MIB or a WIB—the black-dressed entities were on the scene almost impossibly quickly and always in black cars. In other words, a good case can be made for the extraterrestrial origins of the Dogmen.

Finally, to demonstrate that nothing is new about the Dogmen, the following story was published in the pages of several newspapers, including the Pittsburgh Press on May 3, 1905, and the Rake, Iowa, Register on June 15, 1905. The Register’s article

has the eye-catching title of “Dog with a Human Face.” Its subtitle: “Strange Monstrosity Seen by Many Persons In Colorado Hills—Attempt Capture in Vain.” According to the newspaper staff, an unidentified creature had then recently been seen “roaming the hills” of Buena Vista, Colorado, specifically in the vicinity of Wildhorse—a station on the Colorado Midland Railway.

The Register reporter continued that “a prominent ranchwoman” driving across the Arkansas River had the shock of her life when something terrible loomed into view. As she crossed one particular bridge, the woman was shocked to see a “monstrosity” standing in the road. It was terrifying enough to cause her horse to panic, “almost throwing her from the rig.” Interestingly, the Register said that the river was “where the animal has its lair.”

As for the creature’s physical description, it went like this: “It was about the size and build of a full-grown greyhound and of a drab color, its glistening sides being covered with black spots as large as silver dollars.” Its eyes were set close together and its pointed ears stood tall, but then came the most remarkable part of the story: the long-tailed animal “had an almost human face, and a bristling red moustache ornamented the proper place upon its physiognomy.”

The story continued that the animal uttered a “piteous cry” and slunk away through the surrounding brush, turning back to look at the woman as it reached the top of a nearby hill. That’s not all, though; something far more incredible was to come. As it stood atop the hill, the beast “punctured the rarefied atmosphere with sounds that reverberated among the crags” and rose up onto its hind legs.

Not surprisingly, the sight of this menacing, screaming, bipedal dog thing “compelled a pace on the part of the usually staid

horse that was a revelation to the driver."

So, what was it that the woman saw? The references to a long tail and black spots, and its size and build being similar to that of a greyhound, give rise to the possibility of a large cat of some sort. The humanlike face, however—if not a fabrication or a genuine mistake—is far more difficult to explain, as is the ability of the creature to apparently walk on both four legs and two. Yet, this latter issue is something that turns up time and time again in many of the accounts that Linda Godfrey has uncovered.

DWARFS

Loveland is a city in southwest Ohio that has a population of around twelve thousand and which was settled back in 1795. It's a small, picturesque town filled with mountains of history, old buildings, and frog people. Yes, you did read that right. The controversy all began in summer 1955—specifically in the month of July. It was around 4:00 A.M. one day, and all was black and shadowy. Robert Hunnicutt, a volunteer with the local civil defense unit, was driving on a road on the fringes of Loveland when he spotted something amazing and terrifying in equal measures: a group—of three or four, Hunnicutt wasn't sure—of small, humanoid creatures standing under a bridge. Incredibly, they were described as around three feet tall, walking on two legs, and with "lop-sided chests, wide, lipless, froglike mouths, and wrinkles

rather than hair."

A shocked Hunnicutt stopped and stared at the beasts for a few minutes, after which one of the frog things pointed a device—a weapon, or something else, Hunnicutt never knew—into the air, which gave off electric-blue flashes. Hunnicutt, at that point, wasted no time in getting out of the area as soon as possible. His destination: the headquarters of the Loveland Police, where he spoke to Chief John Fritz. Evidently, the strange story was taken seriously, as Fritz had one of his armed deputies keep a vigil at the bridge to try to ascertain what Hunnicutt had seen.

Interestingly, Leonard Stringfield, a noted UFO researcher in Ohio at the time, looked into the affair. He uncovered something intriguing: "Despite my special affiliations with the Ground Observer Corps and the Air Defense Command, I was unable to get any details of official action from the Loveland Civil Defense Authority, from Frank Whitecotton, coordinator for the Hamilton County GOC, or from the Loveland chief of police, John Fritz. However, I was able to learn from a member of the Loveland School Board that the incident had been investigated by the FBI."

In 1955, civil defense unit volunteer Robert Hunnicut reported encountering a reptile- or amphibian-like, bipedal creature near Loveland, Ohio.

The odd encounter was big news for a while but ultimately faded into obscurity until 1972, when a new report surfaced and which, for the city's old timers, instantly brought back memories of Robert Hunnicutt's face-to-face standoff with a group of monsters all those years earlier. Mirroring the Hunnicutt affair, it was when the area was in darkness that the sighting by Ray Shockey took place. What is particularly notable is the fact that Shockey was a Loveland police officer on patrol at the time in the vicinity of the Little Miami River. As he drove past the river, Shockey spied what, at first, he believed was a dog sitting at the side of the road. Given that it was a freezing, wintry, icy night, Shockey slowed down to see if the dog was okay. It quickly became apparent that the "dog" was something else entirely.

As Shockey's cruiser closed in, the four-foot-tall animal leapt

up onto its hind limbs and stared directly at Shockey, which allowed the officer to see its strange, froglike appearance. For a few minutes, the frog man and the officer stared at each other, after which the creature leapt over the guardrail and vanished into the heart of the shadowy river. Shockey raced back to headquarters and quickly prepared a report on his astonishing sighting, such was his conviction that he had seen something truly out of this world. In the wake of the Shockey sighting, other accounts surfaced, all of a "frog-" or "lizard-like" nature.

Whatever the true nature of the frog people of Loveland, Ohio, their origins remain, today, the mystery they were all those years ago, when the lives of two terrified men were forever changed.

Kelly was, and still is, a small, rural town just short of ten miles from Hopkinsville, Kentucky. These towns are the kinds of places where people keep to themselves and nothing of a particularly sensational matter ever happens—apart, that is, from the fateful night of August 21, 1955, when absolute chaos broke out. It all went down at the farmhouse of the Sutton family, who had visitors in from Pennsylvania: Billy Ray Taylor and his wife. It was roughly 7:00 P.M. when Billy Ray left the farmhouse to fetch water from the family's well, and what a big mistake that was.

In mere minutes, Billy Ray was back, minus the water. Terrified, Billy Ray told the Suttons and his wife that as he headed toward the well, he saw a significantly sized, illuminated, circular-shaped object come to rest in a nearby gully. As the group tried to figure out what on earth (or off it…) was going on, they mused upon the possibilities of shooting stars, meteorites, and good old

leg pulling. By all accounts, it was none of those. In just a few minutes, the Suttons' dog began to bark, growl, and snarl in aggressive, uncontrollable fashion—after which it raced for cover underneath the porch. Clearly, something strange was going down. Exactly how strange soon became very apparent.

Intent on making sure they were in control of the situation, Elmer Sutton and Billy Ray Taylor armed themselves with shotguns and headed out into the darkness. In no time, they were confronted by something terrifying: a small, silvery creature—in the region of three feet tall—that was scurrying toward them with its long, apelike arms held high in the air. Sutton did what most folk might do when confronted by a strange, goblinlike thing after sunset: he blasted the beast with his shotgun. To the consternation of both men, the gun had no effect, aside from causing the creature to do a quick and impressive backflip, after which it disappeared into the darkness—for a while.

Rather wisely, Elmer and Billy Ray raced for the safety of the farmhouse and locked the doors behind them.

Rather wisely, Elmer and Billy Ray raced for the safety of the farmhouse and locked the doors behind them. In mere moments, the same creature—or, at least, a very similar one—was seen peering and leering through one of the windows. Elmer's son, J. C., took a shot at it. The only damage was to the window. The small beast scurried away at lightning speed. The curiously named Lucky Sutton, along with Billy Ray, took a tentative walk outside to see if they could see the creature—or creatures. That was a very bad move; as they prowled around the property, a clawed hand

came down from the roof and seized Billy Ray's hair and head.

Terrified, Billy Ray pulled away, screaming, to see the goblin charge across the roof. To their horror, a second creature was seen staring at them from the branch of a nearby tree. A second shoot-out achieved nothing aside from the remarkably weird sight of the creatures floating—rather than leaping or falling—to the ground and then racing into the darkness. The tumultuous events continued throughout the night with guns firing and the wizened, little beasts seemingly doing their very best to create as much havoc and mayhem as was conceivably possible.

Realizing that the situation might very well go on all night, the group decided that only one option was available to them: they had to flee the farm-house, which they did in two cars, making their speedy way to the sheriff 's office in nearby Hopkinsville. The sheer collective state of fear into which the Suttons and the Taylors had been plunged pretty much immediately convinced the sheriff that whatever had happened was no drunken prank.

Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on one's perspective), by the time the sheriff and the family arrived back at the farmhouse, the creatures were gone—they did, however, put in a reappearance in the early hours, conveniently after the police had left. In no time at all, the media got onto the story, as did the U.S. Air Force—the latter coming up with a very bizarre explanation as its staff sought to lay matters to rest.

Before we get to the matter of the explanation, it's important to have a full understanding of the physical appearance of the creatures, which were drawn from the memories and recollections of the players: the Suttons and the Taylors. All of the strange entities were near-identical: long arms, skinny legs, large ears, and yellow eyes. As for their gait, they moved in a strange, pivoting fashion, and they were all silver in color. Cue the Air Force's best

estimate of what really happened.

With absolutely nothing solid—at all—to back up its claims, the Air Force suggested that the goblins were actually monkeys, painted silver, which had escaped from a traveling circus! As cryptozoologist Ken Gerhard notes, it's "a theory more ridiculous than the notion of invading aliens." Nevertheless, the Air Force stuck to its guns, with Maj. John E. Albert being the major proponent of the circus escapee/painted monkeys theory.

Ufologists did not just accept this theory without question. One of the most respected of all UFO researchers was Dr. J. Allen Hynek. He said of his investigation of the Air Force's claim:

Elmer Sutton and Billy Ray Taylor encountered short but terrifying creatures that looked like wild, silvery monkeys. Even though they fired on them with a shotgun, the goblinish beasts did not die.

“I did make an attempt to find out whether there had been any traveling circuses in the area from which some monkeys could have escaped. The monkey hypothesis fails, however, if the basic testimony of the witnesses can be accepted. Under a barrage of gunfire from Kentuckians, over a somewhat extended period, it is unthinkable that at least one cadaver would not have been found. Furthermore, monkeys do not float down from trees: they either jump or fall. And, anyway, I was unable to find any trace of a traveling circus!”

The 1955 Kelly–Hopkinsville saga remains unresolved to this day. The fact that the incident began with the sighting of what may well have been a UFO has led flying saucer sleuths to conclude that a mini alien invasion briefly broke out in rural Kentucky. On the other hand, is it possible that the Air Force was, at least, partly on the right track? Could the creatures have been monkeys, after all? They are questions that, decades later, we are unlikely to ever have answers for.

Some monsters, like Bigfoot, the chupacabra, the Yeti, and Ogopogo, are seen time and time again and across decades—sometimes even centuries. However, a few bizarre beasts put in very brief appearances for startled eyewitnesses and soon vanish, never to be seen again. Perhaps no better example of the latter exists than what has become known as the Dover Demon. It was around 10:30 P.M. on April 21, 1977, when all hell broke loose. William Bartlett, then seventeen, was driving along Farm Street in Dover, Massachusetts, when he spotted something both amazing and terrifying sitting on a wall. It was nothing less than a small, almost goblinlike, beast of about three and a half feet in height that

had huge, glowing eyes and "tendrils" for fingers. Very curiously, it lacked ears, a nose, and a mouth. As for its head, it was described as being "melon"-like and extremely pale.

Given that Bartlett later said, "It scared me to death," it's hardly surprising that he didn't hang around to get a good look at it. Fortunately for Bartlett, however, his testimony didn't stand alone. What was almost certainly the same creature was also seen on the same night by a local boy, John Baxter. It was after midnight when Baxter left his girlfriend's house and made his way home on foot. As he did so, Baxter caught sight in the darkness of a small, humanoid figure heading in his direction. Evidently, the creature hadn't noticed Baxter—at least, not until the last moment, when it suddenly bounded off into the nearby woods. Baxter decided to give chase across a field, through the dark woods, and finally to a gully, where he took a break. It was then that Baxter saw the animal, leaning against a tree. He said:

"As I was looking really close there, I could see the eyes; it was looking at me. I just stared at it for another few minutes and then I just got all these thoughts that maybe it was something really strange. 'Cause, you know, nothing ever happened to me like this before, so I didn't know what to think. So I finally got the thought that maybe it wasn't as safe as it looked, 'cause the way it was staring at me it just seemed like it was—I don't know. I got all these feelings that it was thinking to itself, or waiting to spring, or whatever, you know? And so I backed up the bank kind of fast, and my heart started beating really fast!"

The next evening, the Dover Demon scared the life out of Abby Brabham and Will Taintor, who saw it near a bridge on Springdale Avenue. Brabham recalled: "As I looked at it, it kind of looked for a minute like an ape. And then I looked at the head and the head was very big and it was a very weird head. It had bright

green eyes and the eyes just glowed like; they were just looking exactly at me."

I got all these feelings that it was thinking to itself, or waiting to spring, or whatever, you know?

Then, it was gone. The town of Dover, only about fifteen miles from the city of Boston, had been visited by a monster—but one that didn't hang around and never returned. Given that all three witnesses were teenagers, skeptical folk suggested that the whole thing was nothing stranger than a prank perpetrated by, or on, the trio. To his credit, however, Police Chief Carl Sheridan came to the defense of Bartlett, calling him an "outstanding artist and a reliable witness." So, what was the now legendary Dover Demon? If not the result of a prank, what could it have been?

Loren Coleman, one of the world's leading cryptozoologists, gave his opinion on the mystery of the Dover Demon:

"The short story (no pun intended) is that over a two-day period in April 1977, four people saw a small, 4-foot-tall orange sharkskin creature (somewhat like Golem in Lord of the Rings) in three separate sightings, in Dover, Massachusetts, a rural location near Boston. The case goes down as unexplainable. I don't know the answer to 'what really happened' as all the eyewitnesses checked out and were found to be credible by law enforcement and other people in Dover."

However, down-to-earth explanations do exist, even if they sound unlikely. The "Iron Skeptic" says: "Some theorized that the creature was, in fact, a fox that had contracted a disease of some

sort that caused severe swelling and bloating. Others have theorized that the creature was in fact a baby moose. Martin Kottmeyer went to great lengths explaining why he thought this, and Loren Coleman went to equally great lengths explaining why this wasn't true. My main problem with this theory was that it was reported to be standing on two legs by Baxter; however, it's not unreasonable to theorize that if it were indeed a moose, it was feeding from the upper parts of the tree, and that it was just leaning on it with its two front legs."

In all likelihood, we will never know the true nature of the Dover Demon. All we can say for sure is that whatever it was, it left a deep impression on the people of that little town—and decades later still does.

The story, however, is not quite over.

In the wake of the affair of the Dover Demon, something very strange occurred in the mystery-filled town. Precisely two months to the day after the strange creature was first encountered, a pair of very strange men appeared on the scene. They were not invited, nor were they welcomed. Indeed, the Men in Black seldom are—if ever. They turned up in the town, quite out of the blue, at what was termed the Dover House. Loren Coleman says that the house "was a group home in Dover, for emotionally disturbed boys, serving as a residential branch of the treatment center, the Walker School for Boys, in nearby Needham, Massachusetts. In 1977–1978, I was Walker School's overnight program director and a social worker masters' graduate therapy intern there."

It transpired that just like the mysterious, skeletal Lt. Applegate, who surfaced when Loren Coleman was investigating

the affairs of the Mad Gasser of Mattoon and the Enema Bandit, the two curious-looking men were looking to speak with Coleman. They arrived at the Dover House and spoke with one of the staff members, who made the very unwise move of giving the men Coleman's address. Fortunately, the MIBs did not pay a late-night visit to the Coleman home. Nevertheless, the story of the unsettling encounter did get back to Coleman.

The two characters, he was told, were dressed in black, leather jackets and white motorcycle helmets and warned the woman not to talk about the Dover Demon—under any circumstances at all. This was very weird given that the pair claimed to be nothing stranger than "investigators" from National Geographic! However, something was very strange about the disturbing duo: they spoke in a monotone, robotic style; their arms were constantly by their sides; and they stood upright—almost like the military on guard duty. Looking back on the mysterious matter, Coleman muses thus: "In terms of the Dover Demon–Men in Black case, perhaps these individuals were nothing more than X-Files fans who went overboard, a bit, trying to track me down. Still, the National Geographic cover story is a weird one."

To say the least!

FLATWOODS MONSTER

On the night of September 12, 1952, something terrifying descended upon the small, West Virginian town of Flatwoods. Precisely what it was remains a mystery to this very day. All that can be said for sure is that it was hideous, fear inducing, and downright monstrous. It has, appropriately, become known as the Flatwoods Monster. Situated in Braxton County and dominated by a mountainous, forested landscape, Flatwoods is a distinctly small town—that much is apparent from the fact that today, its population is less than four hundred. Back in 1952, it was even less. On the night in question, however, the town found its population briefly added to by one visitor from … well … no one really knows where.

It all began as the sun was setting on what was a warm, still,

September evening. A group of boys from Flatwoods were playing football in the town's schoolyard when they were frozen to the spot by the sight of a brightly lit, fiery object that shot overhead, provoking amazement and wonder in the process. All that the boys could be sure of was that the object appeared to be either egg shaped or circular. Its color fluctuated from orange to fiery red.

As the stunned children watched in awe, they saw the object begin to descend—at a high rate of speed, no less—then appear to come down on one of Flatwood's largest hilltops. Not surprisingly, being kids, they saw this as a big adventure looming large. The result: they, with a woman named Kathleen May and a recent U.S. Army recruit, Eugene Lemon, headed off for the scene of all the action. It wasn't long before the group reached the hill in question —with nightfall rapidly closing in.

The first thing the group noticed as they reached the darkened peak was something brightly lit within the trees. What it was, no one had a clue, but it clearly wasn't the lights of a farmhouse, truck, or car. Suddenly, the air was filled with a sickening odor—not unlike that of devilish brimstone. That was not a good sign. To their credit, however, they pushed on, determined to figure out the true nature of the source behind the lights. They soon found out: as the air became filled with a strange, sizzling sound, nothing less than a pair of self-illuminated red eyes could be seen getting ever closer. Kathleen May had the presence of mind to bring a flashlight with her, and she quickly focused it on the eyes. In doing so, she also lit up the abominable creature that possessed those fiery eyes.

Looming before the now hysterical band of intrepid souls was an approximately ten-foot-tall, floating monster, which appeared to be humanoid in shape and had a large, black cowling behind its head that gave the entire head a kind of "Ace of Spades" appearance and that was possibly even cloaked. Oddly, its lower

half was ice cream cone-shaped and had wires and cables running from it. This issue of the cone-shaped lower portion led flying saucer sleuths to later suggest that the monster may actually have been encased within some kind of remotely piloted vehicle.

As the creature then turned its attention to the group and wildly fired laserlike beams from its eyes, the brave band was suddenly brave no more. They didn't wait to see what might happen next. One and all fled screaming—possibly for their lives. Mrs. May breathlessly shouted to the boys to follow her to her home, which they all did. On arrival, and possibly as a result of exposure to the noxious odor that hung around the hill, several of the boys became violently ill, feeling nauseous and even outright vomiting.

The town hall in Flatwoods, West Virginia, has installed this Flatwoods Monster chair on its front lawn as a bit of fun for tourists and passersby.

Kathleen May quickly and shakily called the local police, who, rather intriguingly, were busy responding to reports of what was described as an "airplane crash" in the area. It turns out that no such crashed aircraft was ever found—which suggests that the "airplane" and the brightly lit UFO that descended upon the high hill that night were one and the same. As a result of the fact that Flatwoods was, and still is, a very small town, word soon got out about what had happened. Local media were quickly on the scene,

and even the U.S. Air Force sat up and took notice. Despite intense investigations by the press and the military, the mystery of the Flatwoods Monster was never solved—the creature was long gone by the time anyone else was on the scene. It is, however, decidedly interesting to note that Flatwoods is only around 125 miles from the town of Point Pleasant, West Virginia, where, from 1966 to 1967, yet another red-eyed monster was seen. Its famous name is Mothman, about which you will read much more later on.

Formerly classified data now in the public domain may well have some direct and significant bearing upon what was seen at Flatwoods. That data is contained in an April 14, 1950, RAND publication titled "The Exploitation of Superstitions for Purposes of Psychological Warfare," written by Jean M. Hungerford, for the top-secret attention of the U.S. Air Force.

The thirty-seven-page document is a truly fascinating one and delves into some very strange areas, but what really catches the eye is a section of the document that quoted from a book titled Magic: Top Secret. It was written in 1949 by an eccentric character with the curious name of Jasper Maskelyne, who, during the Second World War, was up to his absolute neck in new, novel, and bizarre ways to fool the hordes of Adolf Hitler followers.

Hungerford quoted the following from Maskelyne in her report, which concerns a truly alternative psychological warfare operation that was initiated during the hostilities with the Nazis:

"Our men … were able to use illusions of an amusing nature in the Italian mountains, especially when operating in small groups as advance patrols scouting out the way for our general moves forward. In one area, in particular, they used a device which was

little more than a gigantic scarecrow, about twelve feet high, and able to stagger forward under its own power and emit frightful flashes and bangs. This thing scared several Italian Sicilian villages appearing in the dawn thumping its deafening way down their streets with great electric blue sparks jumping from it; and the inhabitants, who were mostly illiterate peasants, simply took to their heels for the next village, swearing that the Devil was marching ahead of the invading English."

This thing scared several Italian Sicilian villages appearing in the dawn thumping its deafening way down their streets with great electric blue sparks jumping from it….

Hungerford continued to quote from Maskelyne's book in her report for RAND: "Like all tales spread among uneducated folk (and helped, no doubt, by our agents), this story assumed almost unimaginable proportions. Villages on the route of our advance began to refuse sullenly to help the retreating Germans, and to take sabotage against them; and then, instead of waiting for our troops to arrive with food and congratulations of their help, the poor people fled, thus congesting the roads along which German motorized transport was struggling to retire. The German tankmen sometimes cut through the refugees and this inflamed feeling still more, and what began almost as a joke was soon a sharp weapon in our hands which punished the Germans severely, if indirectly, for several critical weeks."

A number of issues are worth noting here. First, the height of the Flat-woods Monster and the British Army's devilish scarecrow

were the same: twelve feet. In addition, the cover of Frank Feschino's lengthy book on the matter (which makes for essential reading)—The Braxton County Monster—shows the Flatwoods Monster emitting powerful lights. In similar fashion, the twelve-foot-tall scarecrow in Italy gave off "frightful flashes and bangs" and had "great electric blue sparks jumping from it."

Then there was the fact that the RAND report that specifically refers to this Italian escapade—and which Jasper Maskelyne described in his Magic: Top Secret book—was prepared for psychological warfare planners in the U.S. Air Force. Also, in his book on the beast of Flatwoods, Feschino notes that the Air Force took careful interest in the Flatwoods affair and what was being reported on the affair by the media.

The RAND report was submitted to the Air Force in April 1950, and Flatwoods occurred in September 1952. Is it possible that in this two-year period, U.S. Air Force psychological warfare planners created their very own—albeit updated and modified—version of the British Army's twelve-foot-tall flashing monster to try to determine what its reaction might be when unleashed upon an unsuspecting populace? This question, of course, gets to the heart of Report from Iron Mountain.

Also, make note of the settings: the British Army's operation was focused on little, isolated villages in Italy, and Flatwoods is a small, rural town in Braxton County, West Virginia, that, even as late as 2000, had a population of less than 350.

Those who suspect that the Flatwoods Monster was some form of alien being may well scoff at such speculations and musings. However, when we can say for sure that the British Army was using twelve-foot-tall, illuminated, scarecrow-style creatures for psychological warfare reasons in the Second World War, is it really a stretch to think that the USAF might have tried something

very similar in 1952 with their very own twelve-foot-tall freakish monster?

FLYING HUMANOIDS

Mothman is a bizarre, flying creature that was made famous in the 2002 movie The Mothman Prophecies, starring Richard Gere, which was based on the book of the same name penned by the late authority on just about everything paranormal and supernatural, John Keel. Mothman researchers have suggested that Mothman may be an extraterrestrial entity. After all, when Mothman was seen in Point Pleasant, West Virginia, in the late 1960s, a wave of UFO activity and a wealth of chilling encounters between the townsfolk and the Men in Black occurred. However, long before Mothman dared to surface from his strange and ominous lair in Point Pleasant, West Virginia, in the mid-1960s, yet another mysterious, winged thing struck terror into the hearts and minds of those who were unfortunate enough to cross its terrible

path.

Certainly, one of the most bizarre of all the many and varied strange beings that haunts the lore and legend of Texas is that which became known, albeit very briefly, as the Houston Batman. The most famous encounter with the beast took place during the early morning hours of June 18, 1953. Given the fact that it was a hot and restless night, twenty-three-year-old housewife Hilda Walker and her neighbors, fourteen-year-old Judy Meyer and thirty-three-year-old tool plant inspector Howard Phillips were sitting on the porch of Walker's home located at 118 East Third Street in the city of Houston.

Walker explained what happened next: "Twenty-five feet away I saw a huge shadow across the lawn. I thought at first it was the magnified reflection of a big moth caught in the nearby street light. Then the shadow seemed to bounce upward into a pecan tree. We all looked up. That's when we saw it."

Perhaps … we should seriously consider the possibility that the Houston Batman made a return appearance, or, maybe, it never went away at all.

She went on to describe the entity as being essentially manlike in shape, sporting a pair of bat-style wings, dressed in a black, tight-fitting outfit, and surrounded by an eerie, glowing haze. The trio all confirmed that the monstrous form stood about six and a half feet tall and also agreed that the strange glow engulfing him was yellow in color. The Batman vanished when the light slowly faded out, which was right about the time that Meyer issued an ear-splitting scream.

Mrs. Walker also recalled the following: "Immediately afterwards, we heard a loud swoosh over the house tops across the street. It was like the white flash of a torpedo-shaped object.… I've heard so much about flying saucer stories and I thought all those people telling the stories were crazy, but now I don't know what to believe. I may be nuts, but I saw it, whatever it was.… I sat there stupefied. I was amazed."

Meyer added, "I saw it, and nobody can say I didn't."

Phillips, meanwhile, was candid in stating the following: "I can hardly believe it. But I saw it.… [W]e looked across the street and saw a flash of light rise from another tree and take off like a jet." For her part, Walker reported the incident to local police the following morning.

As a former resident of Houston, monster hunter Ken Gerhard made valiant attempts to locate the address on East Third Street where the event took place and discovered that it is no longer in existence. It has seemingly been overtaken by the expansion of the nearby Interstate 10. Strangely, and perhaps even appropriately, the location has apparently vanished into the void—much like the Batman did, for a while, at least.

Several years after he first heard about the exploits of the Batman, a close friend of Gerhard told him about the experience of a number of employees at Houston's Bellaire Theater, who claimed to have seen a gigantic, helmeted man crouching down and attempting to hide on the roof of a downtown city building late one night during the 1990s.

Perhaps, in view of this latter-day development, we should seriously consider the possibility that the Houston Batman made a return appearance, or, maybe, it never went away at all. Instead, possibly, it has been lurking deep within the shadows of Houston,

Texas, for more than half a century, carefully biding its time and only surfacing after the sun has set, when overwhelming darkness dominates the sprawling metropolis.

Back in 2004, I interviewed a woman named Desiree, whose father worked at NASA's Houston, Texas-based Johnson Space Center and had a story to tell that was bizarre in the extreme. That does not mean, however, that we should dismiss it as being one of no merit or one that lacks any meaningful value—only that we should view it with open minds that are receptive to challenging ideas and bold, new paradigms.

It was late one night in 1986, said Desiree, when her father returned from his daily routine at the Johnson Space Center. Nothing was particularly unusual about that, she elaborated, as her father was occasionally required to work late into the night. On this particular night, however, things were very different; her father was clearly deeply distressed and even seemed to be on the verge of lapsing into a full-blown anxiety attack.

After Desiree and her mother were finally able to calm him down, her father told a wild and extraordinary story: while walking to his car that night, he had seen, to his complete and utter horror, perched on a nearby building, a large, manlike figure that was utterly black in color and seemed to have a large cape draped across its shoulders and back with two huge, winglike appendages sticking out of each side of the cape. Looking more batlike than birdlike, the wings made a cracking noise as they slowly flapped in the strong, howling wind.

The creature, Desiree's father told his amazed family, had clearly realized that it had been seen. Not only that, he gained the

very distinct impression that the beast was actually relishing that it had been noticed and was even seemingly deriving some form of deranged, evil pleasure from the fact that it had struck terror into the heart of the man.

He could only stand and stare, frozen to the spot in complete and abject fear. The sheer horrific unreality of the situation—namely that of seeing a large, dark, gargoyle-like entity looming ominously over him from a rooftop at NASA's Johnson Space Center—finally hit home with full force, and Desiree's father raced for his car, flung open the door, slammed it shut, and sped off into the darkness. He did not attempt to look back even once.

The creature that stared at the Johnson Space Center employee was described as gargoyle-like, having a somewhat human appearance and sporting bat wings.

Not surprisingly, the family suggested that reporting the encounter to his superiors might not be the wisest move. Desiree's father agreed—for a short while, anyway. After a few weeks, however, the strange event was still gnawing steadily away at his mind and nerves, and he eventually confided in his immediate

superior who, to his great surprise and relief, revealed that this was not the first time such a vile entity had been seen late at night roaming around the more shadowy parts of the Johnson Space Center. In other words, he was not going crazy or hallucinating; the beast was real, and Desiree's father was not the only witness, either.

Indeed, a secret file on the matter had reportedly been opened some months earlier primarily because on one occasion, in the very same location where the winged fiend had been seen, the remains of two dead and horrifically mutilated German shepherds had been found, their bodies drained of significant amounts of blood. As a result of this latest encounter, Desiree's father was himself grilled intently about his experience by "NASA security people who were flown in from somewhere in Arizona—that much I know," as Desiree succinctly worded it. As for the flying monster, reportedly at least, it was never seen again.

Now let's get back to talking about Mothman. A devil-like, winged monster with glowing, red eyes, Mothman's appearance came quite literally out of nowhere and, some say, culminated in high tragedy and death—but what was Mothman of Point Pleasant, and how did the legend begin? To answer those questions, we have to go back to the dark night of November 12, 1966, when five grave diggers working in a cemetery in the nearby town of Clendenin were shocked to see what they described as a "brown human shape with wings" rise out of the thick, surrounding trees and soar off into the distance.

Three days later, the unearthly beast surfaced once again. It was at the highly appropriate time of the witching hour when

Roger and Linda Scarberry and Steve and Mary Mallette—two young, married couples from Point Pleasant—were passing the time away by cruising around town in the Scarberrys' car.

As they drove around the old factory, the four were puzzled to see in the shadows what looked like two red lights pointing in their direction. These were no normal lights, however. Rather, all four were shocked and horrified to discover that, in reality, the "lights" were the glowing, self-illuminating red eyes of a huge animal that, as Roger Scarberry would later recall, was "shaped like a Mothman, but bigger, maybe six and a half or seven feet tall, with big wings folded against its back."

Not surprisingly, they fled the area at high speed. Unfortunately for the Scarberrys and the Mallettes, however, the beast seemingly decided to follow them; as they sped off for the safety of Point Pleasant, the winged monster took to the skies and shadowed their vehicle's every movement until it reached the city limits.

The four raced to the sheriff 's office and told their astounding story to Deputy Millard Halstead, who later stated that "I've known these kids all their lives. They'd never been in any trouble and they were really scared that night. I took them seriously."

Even though a search of the area by Halstead did not result in an answer to the mystery, Mothman would soon return.

Early on the morning of November 25, yet another remarkable encounter with the mysterious beast took place, as John Keel noted: "Thomas Ury was driving along Route 62 just north of the TNT area when he noticed a tall, grey man-like figure standing in a field by the road. 'Suddenly it spread a pair of wings,' Ury said, 'and took off straight up, like a helicopter. It

veered over my convertible and began going in circles three telephone poles high.'"

Keel reported that Ury quickly hit the accelerator. Nevertheless, Ury added: "It kept flying right over my car even though I was doing about seventy-five." Over the next few days more sightings surfaced, including that of Ruth Foster of nearby Charleston—who saw the winged monster late at night in her garden and said: "It was tall with big red eyes that popped out of its face. My husband is six feet one and this bird looked about the same height or a little shorter, maybe."

Even though a search of the area by Hal-stead did not result in an answer to the mystery, Mothman would soon return.

Needless to say, the local media had a field day with the story. Tales of what were referred to as the "Bird-Monster" hit the headlines, while both the skeptics and the police ensured that their views and opinions on the matter were widely known.

Dr. Robert L. Smith, associate professor of wildlife biology in the West Virginia University's Division of Forestry, expressed his firm opinion that Mothman was nothing stranger than a large sandhill crane. This hardly satisfied the witnesses, however. In response to Dr. Smith's assertion, Thomas Ury said: "I've seen big birds, but I've never seen anything like this."

As for the local police, they offered stern warnings to any and all would-be monster hunters contemplating seeking out the mysterious creature, as the Herald Dispatch newspaper noted:

“Sheriff [George] Johnson said he would arrest anybody caught with a loaded gun in the area after dark [and] warned that the scores of persons searching the abandoned powerhouse in the TNT area after dark risked possible serious injury.”

In the weeks and months that followed, further encounters with the bizarre beast were reported; however, they were overshadowed by a tragic event that occurred on December 15, 1967. It was on that day that Point Pleasant’s Silver Bridge (so named after its aluminum paint), which spanned the Ohio River and connected Point Pleasant to Gallipolis, Ohio, collapsed into the river, tragically claiming forty-six lives. Interestingly, after the disaster at the Silver Bridge, encounters with Mothman largely came to a grinding halt.

While a down-to-earth explanation most certainly circulated—namely, that a fatal flaw in a single I-bar in a suspension chain was the chief culprit—many saw, and still continue to see to this very day, the cause as being directly linked with the ominous and brooding presence of the accursed Mothman.

One of the strangest, and, undoubtedly, creepiest of all encounters with a Woman in Black occurred at the height of the Vietnam War, specifically in Da Nang, a city on the south-central coast of Vietnam. It was in August 1969 that a man named Earl Morrison, along with several comrades, had the shock of his life. It was, very appropriately, in the dead of night when the menacing event occurred as the men were on guard duty keeping a careful lookout for the Vietcong. Everything was quiet and normal until around 1:30 A.M. That’s when the atmosphere changed and an eerie form made its presence known to the shocked men of the U.S. 1st

Division Marine Corps.

A statue dedicated to the Mothman legend greets those who enter its home base in Point Pleasant, West Virginia.

Despite being somewhat reluctant to speak out publicly, Morrison eventually changed his mind and, by 1972, was comfortable about discussing the incident, even if he wasn't comfortable with what he encountered. His story makes for incredible reading:

"We saw what looked like wings, like a bat's, only it was gigantic compared to what a regular bat would be. After it got close enough so we could see what it was, it looked like a woman. A naked woman. She was black. Her skin was black, her body was

black, the wings were back; everything was black. But it glowed. It glowed in the night, kind of [a] greenish cast to it. She started going over us, and we still didn't hear anything. She was right above us, and when she got over the top of our heads she was maybe six or seven feet up.

"We watched her go straight over the top of us, and she still didn't make any noise flapping her wings. She blotted out the moon once—that's how close she was to us. And dark—looked like pitch black then, but we could still define her because she just glowed. Real bright, like. And she started going past us straight towards our encampment. As we watched her—she had got about ten feet or so away from us—we started hearing her wings flap. And it sounded, you know, like regular wings flapping. And she just started flying off and we watched her for quite a while."

One of those who took a great deal of interest in the story of the flying woman of Da Nang was a UFO researcher named Don Worley. His personal interview with Morrison revealed additional data, such as the fact that the woman's hair was black and straight, that the wings may have had a slight furry quality to them, that she "rippled" as she flew by, that she appeared to lack bones in her body, and that her wings seemed to be directly "molded" to her hands and arms.

Investigators Janet and Colin Bord say of this particularly odd case: "Usually our reports of winged figures describe them as 'men,' but without any indication whether features are seen which tell the witness definitely that it is a man. In view of this we suspect that so-called 'birdmen' should strictly be termed 'bird people' or 'bird persons,' and that no sex attribution can honestly be made. However, the Da Nang sighting does not come into that category. The only other female winged figure we have on record is a creature from Welsh folklore, the Gwrach y Rhibyn. She

resembled the Irish banshee, moaning and wailing to foretell death in a family."

Let's take a closer look at the Gwrach y Rhibyn.

Marie Trevelyan—a noted expert on Welsh folklore—made more than a few comments that, with the benefit of hindsight, suggest that Earl Morrison and his colleagues were visited by something eerily similar to the Gwrach y Rhibyn. Trevelyan said of the Welsh winged she-monster that it had "long black hair, black eyes, and a swarthy countenance. Sometimes one of her eyes is grey and the other black. Both are deeply sunken and piercing. Her back was crooked, her figure was very thin and spare, and her pigeon-breasted bust was concealed by a somber scarf. Her trailing robes were black. She was sometimes seen with long flapping wings that fell heavily at her sides, and occasionally she went flying low down along watercourses, or around hoary mansions. Frequently the flapping of her leathern bat-like wings could be heard against the window panes."

Did the Gwrach y Rhibyn pay a visit to Vietnam in 1969? It's an amazing question to ponder upon. After all, the Welsh monster was noted for her links to looming death, and no one can deny the tragic number of deaths that occurred during the Vietnam War.

The exploits and nature of this nightmarish Welsh thing were expertly chronicled back in the nineteenth century by a man named Wirt Sykes, who at the time was the American consul for Wales. While the story of the Gwrach y Rhibyn is told in Sykes's 1880 book, British Goblins, it is to Sykes's original notes we turn our attentions. They tell a story that is creepy, horrific, and unforgettable:

“A frightful figure among Welsh apparitions is the Gwrach y Rhibyn, whose crowning distinction is its prodigious ugliness. The feminine pronoun is generally used in speaking of this goblin, which unlike the majority of its kind, is supposed to be a female. A Welsh saying, regarding one of her sex who is the reverse of lovely, is, ‘Y mae mor salw a Gwrach y Rhibyn’

(She is as ugly as the Gwrach y Rhibyn).

Trevelyan said of the Welsh winged she-monster that it had “long black hair, black eyes, and a swarthy countenance. Sometimes one of her eyes is grey and the other black.”

“The specter is a hideous being with disheveled hair, long black teeth, long, lank, withered arms, leathern wings, and a cadaverous appearance. In the stillness of night it comes and flaps its wings against the window, uttering at the same time a blood-curdling howl, and calling by name on the person who is to die, in a lengthened dying tone, as thus: ‘Daa-a-vy!’ ‘De-i-i-o-o-o ba-a-a-ch!’ The effect of its shriek or howl is indescribably terrific, and its sight blasting to the eyes of the beholder. It is always an omen of death, though its warning cry is heard under varying circumstances; sometimes it appears in the mist on the mountain side, or at cross-roads, or by a piece of water which it splashes with its hands.

“The gender of apparitions is no doubt as a rule the neuter, but the Gwrach y Rhibyn defies all rules by being a female which at times sees fit to be a male. In its female character it has a trick of crying at intervals, in a most doleful tone, ‘Oh! oh! fy ngwr, fy

ngwr!' (my husband! my husband!) But when it chooses to be a male, this cry is changed to 'Fy ngwraig! fy ngwraig!' (my wife! my wife!) or 'Fy mlentyn, fy mlentyn bach!' (my child, my little child!) There is a frightful story of a dissipated peasant who met this goblin on the road one night and thought it was a living woman; he therefore made wicked and improper overtures to it, with the result of having his soul nearly frightened out of his body in the horror of discovering his mistake. As he emphatically exclaimed, 'Och, Dduw! It was the Gwrach y Rhibyn, and not a woman at all.'"

Midway through November 1963, one of the most chilling and eerie of all monster encounters on record occurred in the dark and shadowy environment of Sandling Park, Hythe, Kent, England. It was an encounter that, in terms of the description of the creature, provokes Mothman-style imagery—even though the latter, famous creature did not hit the headlines in and around Point Pleasant, West Virginia, until the mid 1960s onward. Although Sandling Park was certainly shrouded in overwhelming darkness at the time of the beastly event, it was hardly the sort of place where one would expect to encounter nothing less than a full-fledged monster. Amazingly, however, according to a group of terrified witnesses, that is exactly what happened.

John Flaxton, aged seventeen on the night that all hell broke loose, was accompanied by three friends, including eighteen-year-old Mervyn Hutchinson. As they walked along a lane running by the park—after returning from a local Friday night dance—the group of friends became aware of a bright object moving overhead, which they at first took to be nothing stranger than a

star. How very wrong they turned out to be.

The teenagers were amazed, and more than a bit scared, by the object's presence as they watched it hover and then drop out of sight behind a group of trees. The boys decided to leave the area with haste, but the light soon loomed into view again. It hovered around ten feet from the ground at an approximate distance of two hundred feet, then once again went out of sight.

The teenagers were amazed, and more than a bit scared, by the object's presence as they watched it hover and then drop out of sight behind a group of trees.

"It was a bright and gold oval," one of the boys reported. "And when we moved, it moved. When we stopped, it stopped." That was not necessarily a good sign!

Suddenly, the boys heard the snapping of twigs from a nearby thicket, and out from the wooded area shuffled a creature of horrendous appearance. "It was the size of a human," reported Mervyn Hutchinson, "but it didn't seem to have any head. There were wings on its back, like bat wings." The group fled, perhaps understandably not wanting to hang around and see what developed next.

Matters didn't end there, however. Five nights later, Keith Croucher saw an unusual object float across a nearby soccer field. Forty-eight-hours after that, John McGoldrick, accompanied by a friend, checked out the location and stumbled upon unusual impressions in the ground, which gave every indication that something solid and significant had landed there.

Neil Arnold, a researcher of paranormal and monstrous phenomena who lives in the county of Kent, has this to say about the matter: "Local UFO experts believed that the case was nothing more than a misinterpretation of natural phenomena, but Flaxton recalled: 'I felt cold all over.'"

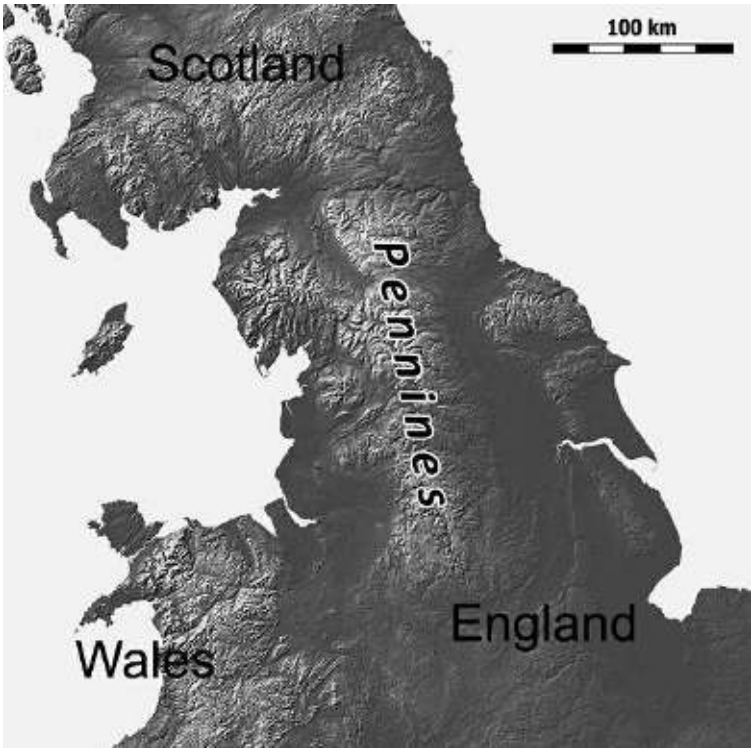
Also, as Arnold notes: "Three giant footprints were also found in the vicinity which were said to have measured two feet long and nine inches across. On 11 December, various newspaper reporters accompanied McGoldrick to the area and found that the woods were illuminated by an eerie, glowing light. No one investigated any further and the case faded as mysteriously as it had emerged."

To this date, the saga of Mothman of Hythe, Kent, remains precisely that: a mystery. Other flying beasts may well fall into this category, too.

Imagine driving, late at night, across the foggy moors of England and coming across what looks like nothing less than a living, breathing pterodactyl! From 1982 to 1983, a wave of sightings of such a creature—presumed extinct for millions of years—occurred in an area called the Pennines, also known as the "backbone of England." It's a story that, in much lengthier fashion, can collectively be found in Jenny Randles's excellent 2002 book, Super-natural Pennines, and in issue nine of UFO Brigantia, a much-missed magazine of the 1980s and 1990s that was edited and published by Andy Roberts.

So far as can be determined, the first encounter occurred at a place with the highly apt nickname of the Devil's Punchbowl on September 12, 1982—it's a place with a long history of UFO

activity, which is very notable. That was when a man named William Green came forward with an astonishing story of what he encountered at Shipley Glen woods. It was a large, gray-colored creature that flew in "haphazard" style and possessed a pair of large, leathery-looking wings. The latter point is notable since it effectively rules out a significantly sized feathery bird and does indeed place matters into a pterodactyl category.



Sometimes called "the backbone of England," the Pennines is a chain of mountains and hills below the border with Scotland that Jenny Randles features in her Supernatural Pennines.

Seventy-two hours later, a woman named Jean Schofield had the misfortune to see the immense beast at the West Yorkshire town of Yeadon. The fact that the thing was heading for the Leeds/Bradford Airport provoked fears in Schofield's mind of a catastrophic, midair collision between a passenger plane and the mighty winged thing. Perhaps inevitably, the local media soon

heard of the sightings, and the story was given pride of place in the newspapers of the day. While the theory that a large bird of prey had escaped from a menagerie or zoo satisfied the skeptics, it did not go down well with the witnesses, who were sure that what they had encountered was something straight out of the Jurassic era.

Rather notably, the media attention brought forth additional witnesses, including Richard Pollock, who claimed that he and his dog had been dive-bombed by the monster, which descended on the pair with alarming speed, "screaming" as it did so. Pollock hit the ground, protecting his dog as he did so. Given the fact that the creature was practically on top of him, Pollock couldn't fail to get a good look at it; he described it as reptilian, with a face that looked like a cross between a crocodile and a bat, which is actually not a bad description of a pterodactyl.

Somewhat of a lull in reports occurred then, but they exploded again in May 1983. A sighting occurred at Thackley on May 6 by a witness whose attention to the creature was provoked by the sudden sound of heavy wings beating above. Yet again, it was a case that not only caught the media's attention but provoked others to come forward. One of them was a Mr. Harris, who said that in November 1977 at Totley, he saw just such a flying monster that soared overhead, growling as it did so. He was adamant that what he saw was a full-blown pterodactyl.

If we can rule out radio-controlled models, hoaxing, and mistaken identity, what does that leave us with? It seems down-right ridiculous to give credence to the idea that a pterodactyl was … flying around….

Quite naturally, further attempts were made to try to lay the matter to rest, including the theory that the pterodactyl was actually a radio-controlled model. Claims of escaped, exotic birds were trotted out but without a shred of evidence to support them. A few more somewhat vague reports trickled in. For the most part, however, the curious affair of the Pennines pterosaur was over.

If we can rule out radio-controlled models, hoaxing, and mistaken identity, what does that leave us with? It seems downright ridiculous to give credence to the idea that a pterodactyl was (or several were) flying around the skies of northern England, yet that seems to have been precisely what was going on. Another explanation just might work. It has been suggested that perhaps what the astonished and terrified witnesses encountered was not a living pterodactyl but the ghost of one. Millions of people believe that the human soul, or life force, lives on after death, so why should that not be the case with animals, too? Certainly, numerous cases are on record of people who claim that beloved, deceased pets have returned to visit them in spectral form.…

A startling encounter with a large, flying creature—far bigger than anything officially known to exist today—occurred in the piney woods of East Texas in late 1964. The source of the story chose to remain anonymous, which is understandable, as not everyone wants the world to know that they have been confronted by a monster. Nevertheless, it's a story that was studied carefully by Texas cryptozoologist Ken Gerhard. He finds it to be highly credible, given that it accords closely with other similar cases he has studied in the Lone Star State and in Mexico and Central America. At the time of the encounter, the source was just fifteen

years of age. Most people have traumatic moments during their teenage years. Very few are like this, however. Ken was told:

"I was on Thanksgiving break from school, out snake hunting along Pine Island Bayou. I was standing along the bank of the bayou facing north when I looked up and to my right (east) only to see, at a distance of roughly 100 yards away, a positively huge bird flying from south to north. It was approximately flying at a height of 150 feet and I was able to observe its flight for a total of one minute or so before it disappeared into a cloud bank."

The man continued that the animal was "a light plum color, normally feathered, wingspan estimated at 10–20 feet (bigger, longer than anything I've ever seen on any living, known bird), grayish clawed feet and grayish beak. In profile it resembled a pterodactyl more so than any bird I am familiar with either in movies, pictures, real life or drawings of same. Its wings moved methodically with an economy of motion which barely seemed fluid enough to support its weight or keep it in motion, let alone airborne. Its wings when spread, had an almost skeletal semi-transparency about them." Moving on from the 1960s to the 1970s. …

In the latter part of 2006, I had the good fortune to meet with a Las Vegas, Nevada-based bus driver names James, who had a remarkable encounter with a massive, winged beast in the deserts outside of town in November 2003. James was careful—in fact, very careful—about how much he said. This was specifically due to the fact that at the time of his encounter, he was high on Lophophora williamsii, which is far more famously known as peyote, and the last thing he wanted was to get into distinctly hot

water with his employers at the bus company. Nevertheless, he did relate the significant portions of the affair. Those portions alone tell a fantastic story.

With the above in mind, some readers might assume or conclude that James's encounter with the monster bird was due to nothing more than the effects of peyote. Well, that is exactly what James believes. It's very important to note, however, that he is not of the opinion that the peyote made him hallucinate the entire experience. Rather, he is of the opinion that the Divine Cactus opened a portal—or a doorway, perhaps—that gave him a brief glimpse into a magical realm that coexists with ours, one that, in a normal state of mind, we cannot access. In simple terms, this is what we might justifiably call another dimension.

Equally intriguing was the specific location of the sighting: the Valley of Fire, which is Nevada's oldest state park, situated around fifty miles from downtown Las Vegas at an elevation in excess of two thousand feet. It's an area with a long and rich history attached to it, too. Certainly, as far back as approximately 300 B.C.E., it was home to the Anasazi people, who farmed the nearby Moapa Valley. Now with the scene firmly set, let's take a look at what exactly James had to say.

Valley of Fire State Park in Nevada is both beautiful and mysterious. The former home of the Anasazi Indians, it has more recently been a spot where a huge, winged beast has been spotted.

He explained to me that at the time in question, he was chilling out on a rocky ridge when, as the effects of the peyote took firm hold of both his mind and his body, something totally unforeseen occurred. It was something just about as awe-inspiring as it was terrifying. As James stared across the panoramic landscape, his attention was suddenly caught by the sight of something of significant size flying directly toward him. While the object was still at a distance, his first thoughts were that it had to be something along the lines of a hang glider or a microlight. As it got closer, however, James realized that it was neither. It was something way stranger.

What James encountered—which glided directly over him at a height of around eighty or ninety feet—was a huge, winged animal, completely black in color and not unlike a long-extinct pterodactyl. As James told me, just about everyone knows what a

pterodactyl looks like. Of course, the big problem was the question of how such an immense, long-dead animal could cruise the skies of Nevada in the early years of the twenty-first century. The only answer he had was the peyote and the possibility that it allowed him a glimpse of something that few of us ever get to experience, at least not in a normal state of consciousness.

It's difficult to know what to do with these reports of the pterodactyl type. They stretch credibility not just to its limits but way beyond. In many respects, they are utterly ridiculous when one thinks about them carefully, yet countless people do claim to have seen such things. Answers? None exist—unless you relegate them all to the realms of hoaxing and mistaken identity, which I don't.

Needwood Forest—of the county of Staffordshire, England—was a chase, or a royal forest, that was given to Henry III's son, Edmund Crouch-back, the 1st Earl of Lancaster, in 1266 and was owned by the Duchy of Lancaster until it passed into the possession of Henry IV. In the 1770s, Francis Noel Clarke Mundy published a collection of poetry called Needwood Forest, which contained his own poem of the same name, one regarded as "one of the most beautiful local poems." Much the same was said about the forest—which was an undeniably enchanting locale filled with magic, myths, and ancient lore, as forests so curiously often are. Today, however, things are very different, and most of the ancient woodland is now, tragically, gone: presently, the area is comprised of twenty farms, on which dairy farming is the principal enterprise; less than five hundred acres of woodland now remain. Some parts of the forest are still open to the public, including Jackson Bank, a

mature, mixed eighty-acre area of woodland that can be found at Hoar Cross near Burton-upon-Trent and is owned by the Duchy of Lancaster.

Then there is Bagot's Wood near Abbots Bromley, which claims to be the largest remaining part of Needwood Forest and takes its name from the Bagot family, seated for centuries at Staffordshire's Blithfield Hall. Situated some nine miles east of Stafford and five miles north of Rugeley, the hall has been the home of the Bagot family since the late fourteenth century, while the present house is mainly Elizabethan with a Gothic façade added in the 1820s to a design probably by John Buckler.

In 1945, the hall, then in a neglected and dilapidated state, was sold by Gerald Bagot (the 5th Baron Bagot) together with its 650-acre estate to the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company, whose intention was to build a reservoir, which was completed in 1953. The 5th Baron died in 1946, having sold many of the contents of the house. His successor and cousin, Caryl Bagot, repurchased the property and thirty acres of land from the water company and began an extensive program of both renovation and restoration. The 6th Baron died in 1961 and bequeathed the property to his widow, Nancy, Lady Bagot. In 1986, the hall was divided into four separate houses, the main part of which incorporates the Great Hall and is owned by the Bagot Jewitt Trust. Lady Bagot and the Bagot Jewitt family remain in residence, and it is against this backdrop of ancient woodland and historic and huge, old halls that something decidedly strange occurred back in summer 1937, when Alfred Tipton was but a ten-year-old boy. Like most adventurous kids, young Alfred enjoyed playing near Blithfield Hall, and in Bagot's Wood, with his friends on weekends and during the seemingly never-ending school holidays. It was during the summer holidays of 1937 that something strange and

monstrous was seen in that small, yet eerie, area of old woodland.

According to Tipton, on one particular morning, he and four of his friends had been playing in the woods for several hours and were taking a break, sitting on the warm, dry grass and soaking in the sun. Suddenly, says Tipton, they heard a shrill, screeching sound that was coming from the trees directly above them. As they craned their necks to look directly upward, the five pals were horrified by the sight of a large, black beast sitting on its haunches in one particularly tall and very old tree, "shaking the branch up and down with its claws tightened around it." This was no mere large bird, however.

It was during the summer holidays of 1937 that something strange and monstrous was seen in that small, yet eerie, area of old woodland.

Tipton says that "it reminded me of a devil: I still don't forget things and that is what I say it looked like." He adds that the creature peered down at the five of them for a few moments and then suddenly opened up its large, shiny wings, which were easily a combined twelve feet across, and took to the skies in a fashion that could be accurately described as part flying and part gliding before being forever lost to sight after perhaps 15 or 20 seconds.

Significantly, when shown various pictures, photographs, and drawings of a wide variety of large-winged creatures that either still roam our skies or did so in the past, the one that Tipton said most resembled the creature he and his mates saw was a pterodactyl. Of course, the pterodactyl is long extinct; however, Tipton is adamant that the beast the boys encountered was

extremely similar to the legendary winged monster of the distant past.

Were the boys merely spooked and confused by their sighting of a large, exotic bird—albeit one of a conventional nature and origin and perhaps even a circus or zoo escapee—or, was some hideous, winged thing really haunting Bagot's Wood on that fateful, long-gone morning back in 1937? Sadly, probably neither we nor Alfred Tipton will ever know the answers to those thought-provoking and controversial questions.

GARGOYLE FROM THE STARS

Colin Perks—an Englishman who died prematurely in 2009—was for years possessed by a definitive obsession. As a child, Perks became fascinated by the legends pertaining to one of the most well-known and cherished figures of British folklore: King Arthur. For Perks, however, Arthur was far more than mere myth. Perks, like so many other students of Arthurian lore, came to believe that the stories of King Arthur were based upon the exploits and battles of an all-too-real ruler of that name. This Arthur held sway over significant portions of ancient Britain from the latter part of the fifth century to the early part of the sixth. He and his fearless soldiers bravely fought off invading hordes of Germanic Saxons and, as a result, left major marks upon British history and mythology.

By the time Perks reached his thirties, he was the proud possessor of a huge library on all things of a King Arthur-themed nature. His research by now was not just focused on the past, however. Rather, Perks, following clues that he believed were hidden in a series of complex codes and ciphers that had been provided to him by a fellow Arthur enthusiast in 1978, was a man on a mission to find the final resting place of King Arthur. The location, Perks concluded, was somewhere in the vicinity of the old English town of Glastonbury.

With origins that date back thousands of years—to the Neolithic era, no less—Glastonbury is noted for its atmospheric, centuries-old abbey, its links to the story of the Holy Grail (the cup alleged to have held the blood of Christ), and even claims that Jesus himself once visited the town. Today, Glastonbury is a hotbed of New Age stores, bookshops, meditation centers, and haunted old inns and hotels. The town is enveloped by a captivating and almost magical atmosphere. It echoes back to a time long gone but one that still tenaciously clings to life in this little town, where the mysterious traditions of old still stand solid. For many years, Colin Perks dwelled in Glastonbury, tirelessly searching for the underground vault that he believed existed nearby that housed the remains of King Arthur and, perhaps, still houses those remains.

As the twentieth century neared its end, Perks's research to try to find Arthur's grave reached its height. He was, by now, convinced that the location was somewhere within a small area of woodland situated just a few miles from Glastonbury itself. When time allowed, Perks headed off into the heart of the woods, metal detector and shovel in hand, trying to uncover evidence that deep below the enchanting woodland floor lay the remains of one of Britain's mightiest warrior kings.

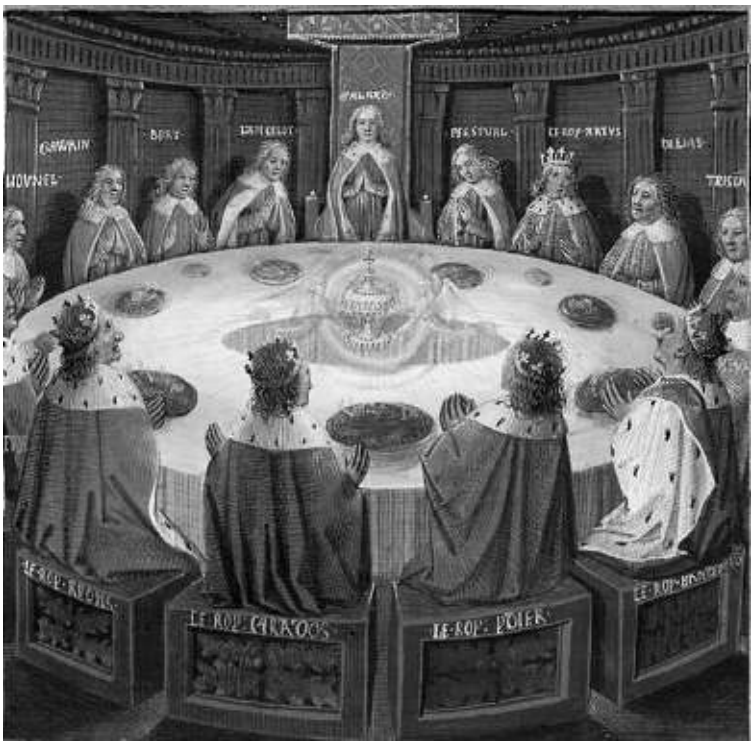
Late one evening in September 2000, after a day and evening spent digging in the woods, Perks received a strange, and somewhat disturbing, phone call. It was from a woman who made it very clear that she wanted to discuss with Perks his studies of an Arthurian nature. She also made it clear that she would not take "no" for an answer.

Colin Perks found this highly worrying since his phone number was not listed in the telephone directory. On top of that, he had no family aside from a very elderly mother in a nursing home, and he rarely discussed his research with anyone. Nevertheless, the mysterious woman at the other end of the line clearly knew all about him, including his forays into the old, nearby woods in search of King Arthur's remains. Perks was puzzled, disturbed, and intrigued by the call. As a result, he agreed to a face-to-face meeting. It was a decision he sorely came to regret.

Several nights later, at the arranged time of 7:00 P.M., a knock came at the door. Perks took a deep breath and opened it. He was confronted by what can only be described as a Woman in Black. Standing before him was a beautiful woman thirty-five to forty years of age. She was dressed in a smart and expensive-looking outfit and had a long and full-bodied head of black hair and just about the palest and smoothest skin possible. For a moment, it was silent. Perks simply stared, feeling various parts captivated, intimidated, and downright frightened. Although the woman's face appeared utterly emotionless, Perks detected a hard-to-define air of hostility, and perhaps even hatred, of him. This was hardly a good start to the evening, and it proceeded to get even worse.

The silence and eerie awkwardness was only broken when, after about twenty seconds, the woman said: "My name is Sarah

Key. May I come in?" Perks nodded, and the woman entered his abode, made her way straight to his couch, sat down, and motioned him to follow by patting the cushion next to her. It was immediately clear who was running the show, and it was not unlike the situation that Sir Peter Horsley found himself in when faced with the mysterious Mrs. Markham back in the 1950s. The strange atmosphere was only amplified by the howling wind and the driving rain that battered the windows of Perks's apartment. It was then that Perks realized that Key's skin, hair, and outfit were all totally dry. How she was able to remain free of the pummeling deluge without the benefit of an umbrella was a mystery, indeed.



The legend of King Arthur, his knights of the Round Table, and the Grail quest are well known to the world, but is it all complete fiction? Why was a researcher warned away from seeking the truth?

Wasting no time, Sarah Key got straight to the point and informed Perks that she and what she described as her

“colleagues” had been carefully watching him for years. She added, in no uncertain terms, that the purpose of her visit was to request that Perks cease his research, as in right now. A suddenly defensive Perks loudly responded that he would never stop his work to find King Arthur’s burial site. On top of that, he scoffed at the very idea that shadowy figures were watching his every move both in Glastonbury and in the heart of the old woods—or, it’s more correct to say that he scoffed until Key reeled off fact upon fact about where Perks was on specific days and nights, even down to which local pubs he visited for dinner and a pint of Guinness after his nightly work of toiling in the woods was over. That’s when the scoffing came to a shuddering halt.

As Perks sat silently, Key continued that Arthur’s grave—or his “chamber,” as she specifically described it—was no ordinary resting place. Rather, it was built atop a paranormal gateway, a portal to other dimensions where hideous and terrible beasts of the kind that would have made H. P. Lovecraft forever pleased and proud dwelled. The chamber had been constructed as a means to prevent the foul things of this strange realm from entering our world. Perks’s dabbling and digging, Key told him, might have been innocent and earnest, but he was playing with definitive fire of a type that could provoke catastrophe and carnage if the magical “gateway” was opened.

Key’s tone then became undeniably threatening, and her face became grim in the extreme. She explained that if Perks did not give up his quest, he would receive yet another visit. From whom, or what, was not made entirely clear, but Perks knew that it was destined to be nothing positive or friendly. At that point, Key stood up and, rather inexplicably, picked up from the living room table a pen of Perks’s and placed it into one of the pockets of her jacket. She laughed slyly as she did so to the extent that a chilled-to-the-

bone Perks dared not ask for it back. Notably, in centuries past, the "wee folk," such as fairies and goblins, invariably stole innocuous items when they visited the world of humans, which they took back with them to their own strange realms of existence as an odd kind of memento. Recall that back in the 1960s, a MIB stole the pen of one of John Keel's closest friends, Mary Hyre—an investigator of the Mothman enigma, which descended on Point Pleasant, West Virginia, in the mid-1960s.

Sarah Key repeated her words of warning at the door and suggested, in the strongest tones, that Perks give up his obsession or else. Perks did not, however. As a result, the second visitor that Key warned about soon turned up.

In front of him was what can only be described as the closest thing one could imagine to a gargoyle….

It was roughly two months later, late at night, when Perks had a truly terrifying encounter. He was driving back to Glastonbury from the city of Bath—which, like Glastonbury, is also located in the English county of Somerset. On one piece of road that lacked illumination, which was curiously free of any other traffic, a bizarre figure suddenly materialized in the road ahead. Luckily, as the road was a small and winding one, Perks's speed was barely twenty-five miles per hour, which gave him time to quickly slam on the brakes. In front of him was what can only be described as the closest thing one could imagine to a gargoyle—that's to say, a tall, manlike figure sporting nothing less than a large pair of bat-style wings. A pair of blazing, red eyes penetrated Perks's very soul. Hysterical with fear, Perks hit the accelerator pedal, and the

creature vanished in front of his eyes just before impact could occur. Matters weren't quite over, however.

One week later, not long after the witching hour, Perks was awakened from his sleep by the horrific sight of the gargoyle looming menacingly over his bed. Paralyzed with fear, with the creature gripping his wrists tightly, Perks could only stare in utter shock as the beast delivered a telepathic-style message to stay away from the woods and to cease looking for the chamber of King Arthur. An instant later, the monstrous form was gone. Perks wondered for a few seconds if it had all been a horrific nightmare. In his heart of hearts, however, he knew it wasn't. In fact, Perks ultimately came to believe that Key—Perks's very own Woman in Black—and the gargoyle were not just interconnected. Rather, he concluded that they were one and the same. For Perks, Key was a hideous and supernatural shapeshifter, one that could take on any form it desired, including that of something akin to a gargoyle—and a beautiful Woman in Black, too, of course.

This did not, however, deter Perks from continuing his research. He continued for the next eight years, never ultimately finding the resting place of King Arthur, not in those mysterious woods or elsewhere, nor did he receive a follow-up visit of the WIB kind. That was not the end of the high strangeness, however. In 2002, Perks claimed to have photographed, from his position on a bridge, nothing less than a sea serpent traversing the waters of London's famous River Thames in an area of the river that was directly opposite the headquarters of MI6, which is the British equivalent of the CIA. Precisely what all this meant, Perks never knew, but he felt that the sighting of the alleged creature, and its close proximity to MI6, was intended as a warning to keep away from things that didn't concern him. Such was Perks's concern about the photograph, he mailed it to me, forever wishing to wash

his hands of it. I said to Perks, when I received the picture, that to me, it looked like a thin log bobbing along on the water. Perks replied that even if that were the case, the fact that it appeared to resemble a serpent—and that he was there at the very time it appeared, and with his camera, no less—was evidence of some kind of supernatural, "trickster"-style phenomenon giving him a warning.

If it was such a warning, it's somewhat unsettling—and undeniably tragic—that death came for Perks while he was only in his sixties. Whether Colin Perks's death was due to bad luck, ill health, or the actions of Sarah Key—perhaps the ultimate British Woman in Black—is something we will likely never know. The mystery of King Arthur—and of that alluring, menacing, and dark-garbed beauty—remains.

A very interesting, and extremely similar, parallel exists to the ultimately tragic affair of Colin Perks. It adds a great deal of weight to Perks's claim that someone was trying to silence those who just might be getting too close to the truth surrounding certain characters from British folklore, legend, and mythology.

The story revolves around a man named Michael "Drew" Hartley, a freelance television producer from Brighouse, West Yorkshire, England. In 1996, Hartley came up with the idea of putting a show together on a certain monument near the English village of Clifton. It marks the alleged grave of none other than yet another fabled English hero: Robin Hood. Both Kirklees Priory—a twelfth-century structure—and Kirklees Hall, which was built in the sixteenth century, play a role in the story. As for the monument, it's a centuries-old structure situated on the Kirklees Estate, the

accompanying inscription of which maintains that Robin Hood died on Christmas Eve in the year 1247 and that his remains are housed within.

A memorial statue erected for the legendary Robin Hood stands by the castle in Nottingham, England. As with the search for King Arthur, researching the truth behind the myth was prevented by threatening warnings.

In an effort to get the project moving, Hartley brought on board a pair of students from Dewsbury College as well as an employee of Brighouse Library. They didn't last long, however; in a situation closely mirroring that of Colin Perks in 2000, the two students claimed to have received late-night visits from someone

who warned them not to have anything at all to do with the Robin Hood production—unless, that is, they wanted to see their futures ruined and their lives plunged into "even more serious" situations. As for the librarian, she suddenly cut off all contact with Hartley, citing other commitments. She wouldn't even speak to him, instead choosing to sever her ties via a solitary fax.

Notably, at the height of this very odd affair, Hartley himself received a phone call from a man with an upper-class English accent, who claimed to be in the employ of MI6 and who, although not threatening, reeled off a wealth of personal data on Hartley—making it clear to Hartley that he knew all about him. Note that it was on a stretch of the River Thames, London, that was overlooked by the MI6 headquarters where Colin Perks claimed to have seen, and photographed, a sea serpent in 2002.

As for Hartley's film on Robin Hood, it was never made.

GOLIATH AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

Was one of the most famous and legendary characters of the Old Testament an extraterrestrial being of giant size? We're talking about none other than Goliath. It has been suggested that the legendary "giants" of the Old Testament were, in reality, either the extraterrestrial Anunnaki or, at the very least, their half-human and half-E.T. offspring. On this particular issue, researcher Angela Sangster says: "Were the giants spoken of in Genesis actually aliens from another planet? The Enuma Elish (the creation story according to the ancient Babylonians) has many parallels with the Bible. The Book of Genesis speaks of these giants (also called Nefilim) who were taught by the Church as having been angels who came to Earth and cohabitated with the daughters of Man (Genesis chapter six). The Book of Enoch, which was removed

from the Christian Bible, speaks of the resulting hybrids of humans and these giants, or 'watchers.'"

Zecharia Sitchin, not surprisingly, had things to say on this matter, too: "Who were the Nefilim, that are mentioned in Genesis, Chapter six, as the sons of the gods who married the daughters of Man in the days before the great flood, the Deluge? The word Nefilim is commonly, or used to be, translated 'giants.'"

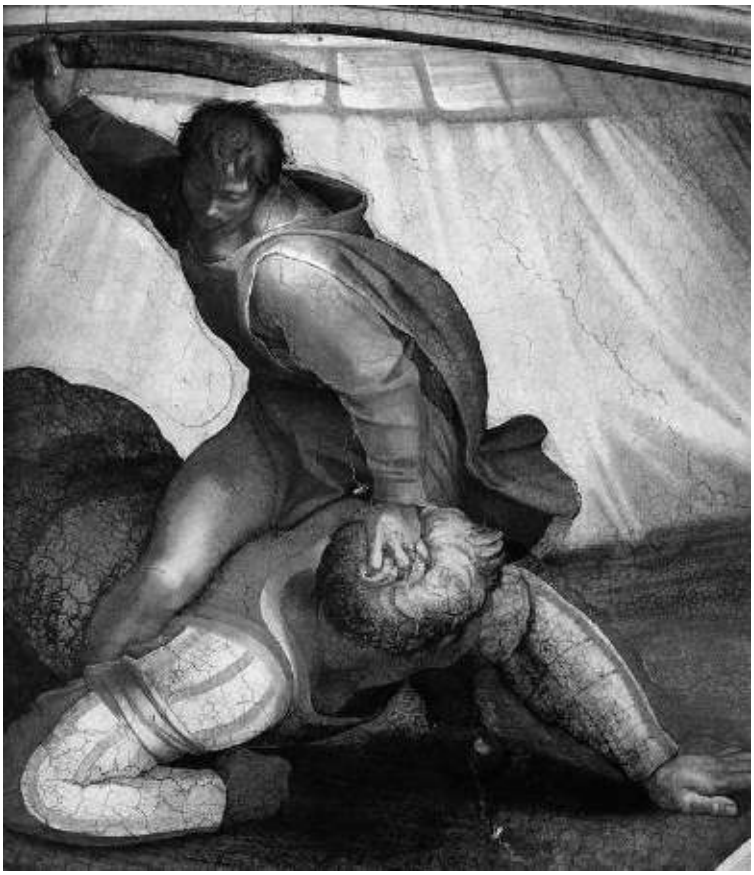
He continued: "I questioned this interpretation as a child at school, and I was reprimanded for it because the teacher said 'you don't question the Bible.' But I did not question the Bible. I questioned an interpretation that seemed inaccurate, because the word, Nephilim, the name by which those extraordinary beings, 'the sons of the gods' were known, means literally, 'Those who have come down to earth from the heavens.'"

Further evidence of ancient giants absolutely abounds in the pages of the Bible, as the website Beginning and End clearly shows: "When Moses sent his spies to scout the Promised Land so the children of Israel could enter it, the spies reported seeing beings there who were giants. The Bible makes it abundantly clear that there were races of people at that time who were so large, that regular sized men appeared as 'grasshoppers' before them.… And we see that when the great servant of the Lord, Joshua, was sent to conquer the Promised Land that God commands him to kill all of the men, women and children of these giant races. They were to be wiped as if any remnant of their kind would post a great danger."

The words of Numbers 13:31 confirm this particular story: "But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought

up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

Moving on to Genesis 6, the words of which point in the direction of cross-breeding between the giant, alien men and human women: "That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."



In 1 Samuel 17, the Bible tells of how the future King David successfully fights Goliath of Gath, a giant who is a champion of the Philistines (Sistine Chapel art by Michelangelo). Speculation exists that Goliath, a Nephilim (a word also translated as "fallen"), was of an alien race.

All of this raises an important question: is it possible that the legendary giant, Goliath—perhaps the definitive giant of all time—was an extraterrestrial, one of the Anunnaki? Certainly, the question is a controversial one. That does not mean, however, that we should outright dismiss it.

The Old Testament story of Goliath's death at the hands of David (who ultimately went on to become the second king of the United Kingdom of Israel and Judah) is a well-known and

thought-provoking one. It can be found in Samuel 1, chapter 17. It tells of a violent confrontation between Philistine forces and those of the Israelites at the Valley of Elah, which is located on the West Bank of modern-day Israel near the city of Hebron.

So, the story goes, for no fewer than forty days, the most feared soldier of the Philistines, Goliath, taunts, goads, and dares the Israelites to send a solider to try to defeat him. Goliath asserts that whoever wins—he or the chosen Israelite—will also decide the outcome of the entire battle. The stakes, then, are high in the extreme. David is the only one who dares to take on the mighty giant, and he does so in a decidedly alternative fashion: whereas Goliath is heavily armored and equipped with a large shield and a powerful, razor-sharp sword, David elects to arm himself with nothing more than a sling and a handful of stones.

Select parts of the story, as told in the Old Testament, follow: "The Philistines gathered their forces for war and assembled at Sokoh in Judah. They pitched camp at Ephes Dammim, between Sokoh and Azekah. Saul and the Israelites assembled and camped in the Valley of Elah and drew up their battle line to meet the Philistines. The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them.

"A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span. He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him.

“Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, ‘Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us.’ Then the Philistine said, ‘This day I defy the armies of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other.’ On hearing the Philistine’s words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

“Now David was the son of an Ephrathite named Jesse, who was from Bethlehem in Judah. Jesse had eight sons, and in Saul’s time he was very old. Jesse’s three oldest sons had followed Saul to the war: The firstborn was Eliab; the second, Abinadab; and the third, Shammah. David was the youngest. The three oldest followed Saul, but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father’s sheep at Bethlehem.

David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead.

“For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.

“David said to the Philistine, ‘You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. This day the Lord will deliver you into my hands, and I’ll strike you down and cut off your head.…’

“As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell, face down on the ground. So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him. David ran and stood over him. He took hold of the Philistine’s sword and drew it from the sheath. After he killed him, he cut off his head with the sword.”

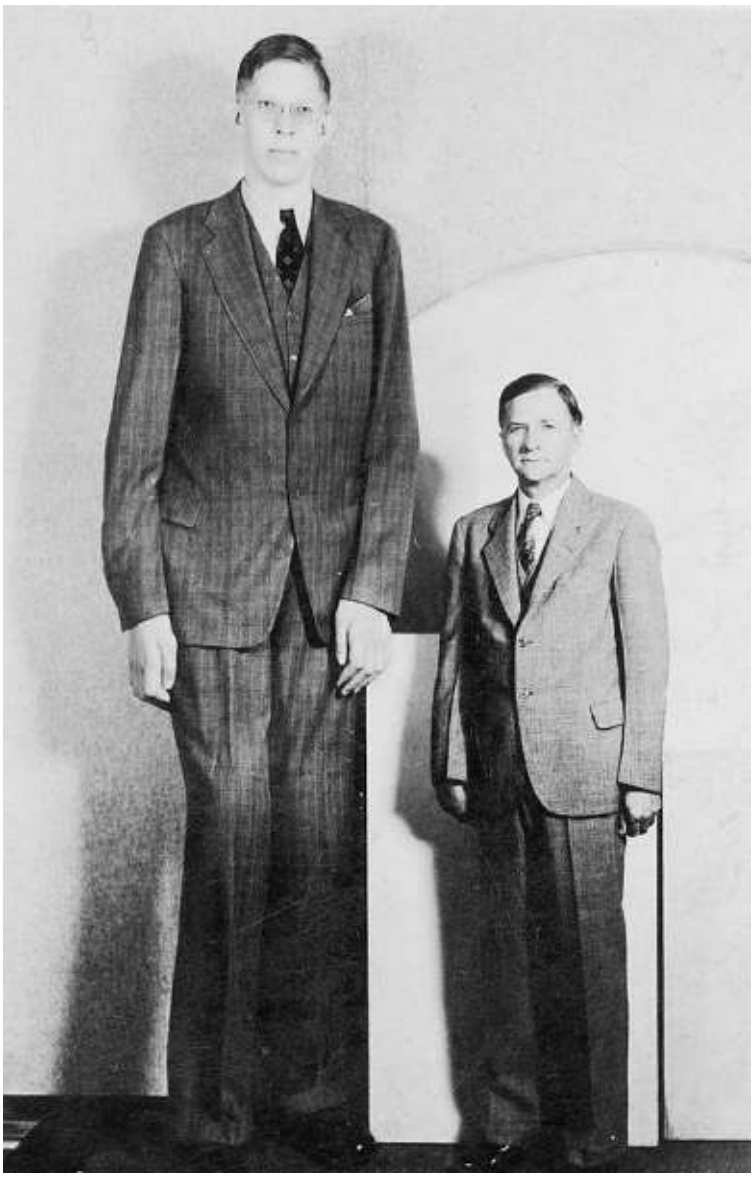
Those who accept the Bible literally might be inclined to suggest that Goliath was simply a tall man, a giant possessed of such incredible fighting skills and appearance that they made him feared throughout the land. However, reasons do exist why we should conclude that Goliath’s reputation was based around much more than that. Although the Dead Sea Scrolls provide a height for Goliath of six feet, nine inches, additional ancient texts state that his height was just a few inches short of an astonishing ten feet. Six-foot-nine is not at all unheard of in today’s world—check out the average basketball team. Ten feet, however, most assuredly is.

The tallest undisputed man on record is Robert Wadlow. A disorder of the pituitary gland caused Wadlow, of Alton, Illinois, to grow to a height of eight feet, eleven inches. The disorder also took his life at just twenty-two in 1940. Moreover, Wadlow’s height and weight had major, adverse effects on his legs, which had to be supported by braces at all times, causing him to slowly shuffle as he walked. In addition, Wadlow was plagued by infections in his legs, feet, and ankles. In other words, for the average human, really immense heights result in major problems.

In short, we are not genetically programmed to reach such heights, and if we do, the results are never positive.

All of this is in sharp contrast to Goliath who, we are told, was a powerful, skilled warrior. In addition, his immense size did not appear to have been caused by a disorder of the pituitary gland or, indeed, of anything else. The description of Goliath is simply that of an immense, well-proportioned giant, one who was around a foot taller than anyone else in the entirety of recorded history. In view of that, we might want to give careful consideration to the possibility that when David ended the life of Goliath, he also took the life of someone who was not entirely human.

As we'll see now, giant-sized aliens just might still be with us.



One argument about Goliath was that he was a man suffering from hyperplasia, a defect of the pituitary that causes uncontrolled growth. Robert Wadlow (pictured) grew to be nearly nine feet tall but suffered so many physical problems that it would be unlikely a man with a similar condition could be a warrior.

For decades within the annals of ufology, countless types of apparent alien entities have been reported by startled witnesses to

UFOs and their otherworldly crews. The list of extraterrestrial life forms is truly bizarre and includes beings that resemble (a) huge, flying jellyfish; (b) oversized bananas; (c) the Michelin Man; and (d) long-nosed, scrawny humanoids with glowing, red eyes. However, such beings are most assuredly not typical of those reported in the vast majority of close encounters of the ufological kind. Indeed, they are firmly in the minority. Dominating the UFO scene are without doubt the human-looking Space Brothers, the insectlike Greys, and the sinister Reptilians, but a surprising number of reports are on file describing giant-sized aliens, too. While the tales of alien giants most certainly do not attract the same sort of attention and acclaim as their long-haired cousins did way back in the contactee-driven era of the 1950s and the emotionless Greys do today, that does not mean that such issues are of no consequence. In fact, one could convincingly argue quite the opposite. Two such notable cases emanate from the British Isles, the details of one of which were given to Charles Bowen, a former editor of Flying Saucer Review magazine, which were duly published in a classic book on alien entities that Bowen edited himself called The Humanoids. The year was 1958, and the location was very near to Balmoral, Scotland. As part of their basic training, an Aberdeen-based unit of the Territorial Army had been dispatched to the area in question to take part in a weekend of maneuvers.

During the course of the exercise, two members of the group were deployed to guard a small hilltop and, fully equipped, set about digging themselves a trench for cover. On the first morning, just as dawn was breaking, both heard what they later described as a strange “gurgling” sound that seemed to originate from behind a dense group of trees several hundred yards from their position. Unsurprisingly somewhat curious, they set out to investigate when

two giant, humanoid figures suddenly emerged from the shadows and proceeded toward them in ominous, lumbering fashion.

Naturally overcome with overwhelming terror, the pair hastily retreated. As they ran in panicked style, they heard a "swishing noise" and, glancing over their shoulders, saw a gigantic, disc-shaped object in the sky above, which appeared to be following them. Reportedly "pulsating," the UFO swooped low over their heads and—to the complete and utter relief of the pair—quickly disappeared, curiously trailing a shower of sparks as it vanished from view.

A similar case involving the Schwab family, who was then living in the English city of Bath, occurred late one weekend night in mid-March 1978 while they were attending a family get-together in the county of Wiltshire. While driving past the legendary Stonehenge around 11:00 P.M., they were shocked to the core by the startling sight of a "twelve-foot-tall thing, like a giant man," standing in the middle of the road. Not surprisingly, Mr. Schwab brought the car to a rapid, screeching halt, and he, his wife, and his son watched amazed as a bright light from above suddenly enveloped the mighty being, which "lit it up and we could see it was like me and you, but twice as tall and in a silver suit and two big eyes."

As they ran in panicked style, they heard a "swishing noise" and, glancing over their shoulders, saw a gigantic, disc-shaped object….

Even more startling, the huge creature then began to slowly rise into the beam of light—which, the three could now see, was

“coming out of the bottom of a big square-shaped object in the sky, and black [in color] that hummed so loud and made us all feel sick.” Within seconds, the giant and the beam of light were gone, and the mysterious craft duly soared into the heavens, leaving the Schwab family wondering what on earth—or, very possibly, off it—had just happened. Rogue cases of Goliath-like aliens in decades past may not attract the same levels of attention and fascination as those of today’s alleged DNA-stealing, pasty, skinny, denizens of Zeta Reticuli, but that does not mean they are without merit. After all, if extraterrestrials are visiting us, then perhaps—just like us—they come in all sorts of shapes and sizes!

GREEN ENTITIES

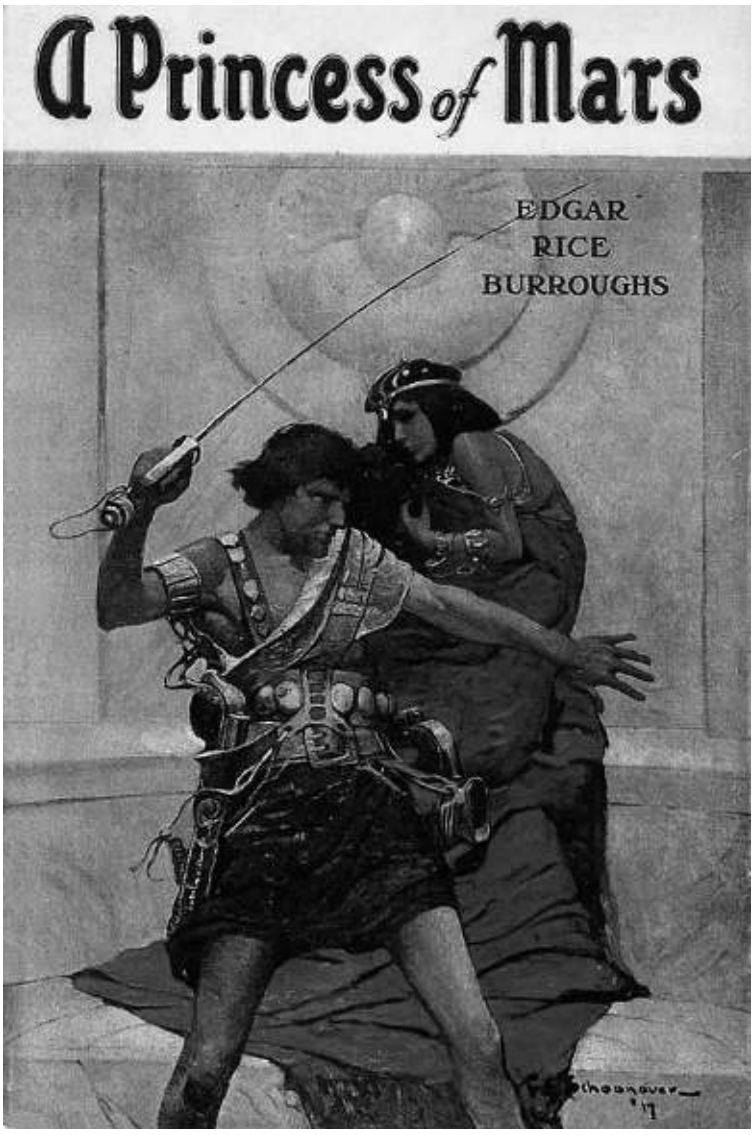
Within the field of ufology, the term "little green men" turns up with deep regularity—usually in a disparaging, fun-poking, debunking fashion—and, although it's a term that has very much become ingrained within popular culture, it's a fact that reports of little, green men are not uncommon in UFO research. Certainly, one of the most famous—or, perhaps, infamous—examples can be found in a certain saga that occurred on the night of August 21, 1955.

The location was a farmhouse situated between the towns of Kelly and Hopkinsville, Kentucky. What began with sightings of strange lights in the sky soon expanded into a definitive shoot-out with a group of little, green-colored men. The farmhouse belonged to the Sutton family, who wasted no time in trying to blast the

diminutive things into oblivion. It's a case that remains a ufological favorite. The association between aliens and small, green humanoids isn't exclusively tied to the Kelly–Hopkinsville case, however.

A researcher of folklore named Chris Aubeck has been able to determine that those three, now famous, words—"little, green men"—date back to the final years of the nineteenth century. In 1899, for example, the Atlanta Constitution newspaper published a story written by Charles Battell Loomis titled "Green Boy from Hurrah"—the "Hurrah" of the title being a reference to another world. The renowned fantasy novelist Edgar Rice Burroughs wrote of the "green men of Mars" in his 1906 story A Princess of Mars.

On May 22, 1947, just one month before the term "flying saucer" was coined (following the sighting of a squadron of UFOs seen over Mount Rainier, Washington State, by a pilot named Kenneth Arnold), a reference to "little green men" was made in a Harrisburg, Illinois, newspaper, the Daily Register. Although the small article was on a medical condition that can cause the skin to turn green, it demonstrates that the terminology was in popular use before UFOs were, themselves, a part of our culture. Four years later in 1951 Mack Reynolds's sci-fi novel The Case of the Little Green Men was published. The subject matter was alien entities infiltrating the human race.



In A Princess of Mars, author Edgar Rice Burroughs described a race of Martians as having green skin. Although he didn't invent the idea, he certainly helped popularize the idea of green men from Mars.

We may never know for sure when the "LGM" term was specifically created; however, when it comes to the matter of potential, ancient aliens, we find a link between the phenomenon and those now widely used three words. It's a story that takes us to the East Coast of England and centuries back in time.

The tale goes that back in the twelfth century, a young girl and boy of strangely green-hued skin appeared in the English village of

Woolpit, which is situated between the towns of Bury St. Edmunds and Stowmarket. The children claimed to have come from a magical place called St. Martin's Land, which existed in an atmosphere of permanent twilight and where the people lived underground on nothing but green beans. While the story has been relegated by many to the realms of mere myth and folklore, it may not be just that. It might, actually, be much more.

According to the old legend, the two children remained in Woolpit and were ultimately baptized by the villagers, who accepted them as their very own. Although the boy ultimately grew sickly and eventually died, the girl did not. She thrived and finally lost her greentinged skin to normal-colored skin of healthy appearance. She also, somewhat in defiance of the disapproving attitudes of certain members of the village, became, as it was amusingly termed back then, according to the legend, "rather loose and wanton in her conduct."

Today, the story shows no signs of going away anytime soon. In fact, the people of the village of Woolpit still embrace the story to this very day, as the following extract from the village's official website demonstrates:

"In 1016 Ulfketel, Earl of East Anglia, granted the church and manor of Wlfpeta to the Abbey of St Edmunds. The monks received ten marks yearly from this grant, but the King appropriated the revenues for the benefit of one of his officials. A monk named Sampson determined to put matters right and in 1159 travelled to Rome to obtain a charter from Pope Alexander III. Despite being captured and robbed by his enemies in the course of his journey, Sampson managed to preserve the pope's precious letter directing the reversion of Woolpit and its church to the monks, and returned to England after three years. The monks were once again able to enjoy the income, and Sampson was later

appointed Abbot.

Very briefly, reapers were astonished at the discovery of a boy and a girl in a hole in the ground. The children were green, and spoke no recognizable language.

"One prominent feature of the village sign is two small children. They depict a story that goes back to the 12th century and tells the legend of 'The Green Children of Woolpit.' This curious tale is recorded as taking place at about the same time as Sampson's journey to Rome. Very briefly, reapers were astonished at the discovery of a boy and a girl in a hole in the ground. The children were green, and spoke no recognizable language. The boy, who was sickly, soon died, but the girl grew up in Woolpit, and is said to have married a man from King's Lynn. This story has been re-enacted on many occasions and has appeared on childrens' television."

Ralph of Coggeshall, a thirteenth-century monk, wrote specifically of the strange girl, who fortunately survived and thrived in Woolpit all those centuries ago:

"Being frequently asked about the people of her country, she asserted that the inhabitants, and all they had in that country, were of a green color; and that they saw no sun, but enjoyed a degree of light like what is after sunset.

"Being asked how she came into this country with the aforesaid boy, she replied, that as they were following their flocks,

they came to a certain cavern, on entering which they heard a delightful sound of bells; ravished by whose sweetness, they went for a long time wandering on through the cavern, until they came to its mouth.

"When they came out of it, they were struck senseless by the excessive light of the sun, and the unusual temperature of the air; and they thus lay for a long time. Being terrified by the noise of those who came on them, they wished to fly, but they could not find the entrance of the cavern before they were caught."

The fact that both wild children were reportedly green-skinned and lived underground in a mysterious locale has led many to disregard the tale out of hand as one of fairy-based, mythological proportions and nothing else whatsoever. That may not actually have been the case, however.

The pair may have been suffering from a condition called hypochromic anemia in which the sufferer—as a result of a very poor diet that, in part, affects the color of the red blood cells—can develop skin of a noticeably green shade. In support of this scenario, hypochromic anemia was once known as chlorosis, a word formulated in the early 1600s by a Montpellier professor of medicine named Jean Varandal. Why did Varandal choose such a name? Simple: it came from the Greek word chloris, meaning greenish-yellow or pale green.

Therefore, we might very well, and quite justifiably even, conclude that the strange children of Woolpit were definitively wild in nature, and given their state of poor health, they may certainly have lived poor and strange lives, very possibly deep underground—or, perhaps, permanently under a thick canopy of dense forest of the type that dominated England at that time—with others of their kind, in and around Suffolk, just as they had claimed to the villagers of Woolpit, all the while struggling to

survive on the meager supplies of food available to them that were ultimately responsible for their greenish-yellow hue.

Another possibility, however, is that these little, green children may not have been of this world. They may have been ancient extraterrestrials.

Dr. Karl Shuker, an authority on the mysteries of our world and someone who has spent a great deal of time investigating the saga of the green children of Woolpit, says, “A very different and far more dramatic explanation was proffered by Harold T. Wilkins, an investigator of unexplained anomalies. In his Mysteries: Solved and Unsolved (1959), Wilkins boldly proposed that the green children may have entered our world from a parallel version (existing in a separate dimensional plane but directly alongside our own), by accidentally passing through some form of interdimensional ‘window’ bridging the two. Another dramatic proposal is that the green children are extraterrestrials. As long ago as 1651, Robert Burton opined in his tome Anatomy of Melancholy that they may have come from Venus or Mars.”

On a similar path, Tristan Eldritch notes, “To a modern reader, the children might suggest stranded extraterrestrials of some kind, and this interpretation of the tale goes back much further than you would imagine.” Indeed, as Eldritch also reveals, “the story found its way into Francis Goodwin’s fancy The Man in the Moone (1638), a work sometimes regarded as the very earliest example of science fiction.”

Researcher Melanie Koslovic says, “It has also been suggested that the children may have been aliens, or inhabitants of a world beneath the Earth. In 1996 an article was published in the magazine

Analog concerning this mystery; astronomer Duncan Lunan hypothesized that the children were accidentally sent to Woolpit from their home planet due to a malfunction in their 'matter transmitter.'

"Lunan thinks that the planet from which the children originated may be trapped in a synchronous orbit around its sun, presenting the conditions for life only in a narrow twilight zone between a fiercely hot surface and a frozen dark side. He believes the children's green color is a side effect of consuming genetically modified alien plants eaten on their planet."

HubPages notes of Lunan's theory that "encouraged by the introduction of this element of science fiction to the proceedings, another unusual hypothesis has surfaced. The foundation of this theory is based on the belief that the children came from another dimension. Proponents of this reasoning believe that the pair inadvertently discovered a cave opening which was a portal between their dimension, and our own. Evidently, the portal was not a two-way access point; or once the children were through, it vanished: as no one was ever able to pinpoint such an opening near the wolf pit where the two were discovered."

British journalist and author Harold T. Wilkins proposed that the green-skinned, short creatures people were encountering were coming from a parallel, alternative reality.

Duncan Lunan himself says that the green girl ultimately became the wife of one "Richard Barre, one of Henry II's senior ambassadors, which rather puts paid to the 'runaways from some primitive tribe' class of explanations. Her first, illegitimate child may have been fathered by Henry himself. I've traced her descendants to the present—one of them was deputy head of the House of Lords under Margaret Thatcher, and he thinks it's a hoot: 'I knew my ancestors were colorful, but not that colorful.' It looks as if the children grew up in a human colony on a planet with a trapped rotation and were returned to Earth in a matter-transmitter

accident, one of a number which happened while the Earth's magnetic field was disturbed by the most violent solar activity since the Bronze Age."

Before you write off Lunan's theory as being far too fanciful, it's worth noting that he attended Marr College and Glasgow University. He has an M.A. with honors in English and philosophy with physics, astronomy, and French as supporting subjects and has a postgraduate diploma in education.

Such is the age of the curious tale of Woolpit's centuries-old saga of the village's eerie, green-skinned children, we'll likely never know if they really were ancient aliens or of far more down-to-earth origins. Whatever the truth, though, of one thing we can be sure: the enchanting nature of the story ensures that with every new generation that comes along, it gathers more momentum and provokes increased fascination.

GRINNING MAN

The Grinning Man is a Man in Black-type being who wears a black suit and a black fedora and sports a terrifying smile, hence his name. "Christine" grew up in West Texas and was confronted on more than a few occasions by one of the weirdest and creepiest offshoots of the extraterrestrial MIB mystery—namely, the so-called "Grinning Man."

"I haven't told a lot of people about it. When I first saw the person, I was about one or two years old. I have a very long memory. It was like the typical thing that you hear: it was this man who would stand in the doorway of my bedroom. I remember standing up in my crib and holding onto the bars and he wore a fedora and a tan raincoat and black trousers, shiny shoes and black leather gloves. His face wasn't like someone who had been

burned, but he just stood there and would grin. There was nothing friendly about the way he was grinning. It was horrible. Emotionless, didn't blink. And he came off and on for a few years.

"Even as I got older and slept in my own bed I would wake up sometimes, like at 3 o'clock in the morning, and that went on. That still happens: all of a sudden I'll be wide awake at 3 o'clock in the morning, for no apparent reason. But as a kid I'd wake up at 3 o'clock and he'd be there. I didn't have any frame of reference for it. Of course, my mom didn't believe me; she just thought I was dreaming.

"But there were all sorts of strange paranormal things that happened throughout my childhood and I wonder if it was all part of the same thing. I even got weird phone calls as a teenager. The phone would ring, and it sounded like a little kid speaking in another language; just rapidly talking into the phone. I thought at the time it was some little kid got on a payphone and started dialing numbers from another country. But, when I read The Mothman Prophecies, I went: Holy shit! This was the same thing.

"What kind of validated that this person was real was that when I was twelve, a friend and I were out riding our bikes about 9:30 at night in the summer—it was a small town in west Texas. And we stopped and were looking in the doors of the Baptist church, as they had just put in new carpets. A big Saturday night! But, we both turned at the same time to look behind us and this man appeared like right on the edge of the street light and started walking towards us, and he was wearing the exact same outfit: the fedora and the tan overcoat and black pants. But, this time, his whole head and hands were bandaged. We didn't speak; we just took off like a shot, around the corner, to her house. We didn't know what to make of it, but I thought it was probably that same person that I used to see. I never saw him again.

“When I got into my early twenties, I was living in Dallas and I met a girl; we got to talking about paranormal stuff and she lived in Lufkin, in east Texas. She said that she and her sister shared a room and that sometimes she would wake up and there would be this man in her room. She said he wore a hat and a long coat. He reminded her of the McDonald’s “Hamburglar” and he would just stand there grinning at her. One night, she woke up and he was looking at her, but he was petting her sister’s head while she slept.

“And, then, a few years later, another friend of mine who had grown up in New York, she had seen a similar man who would stand in her room. I thought, okay that’s great; I am absolutely not nuts. I had lights that would turn off and on. My stuff got moved around all the time. I still have my things get moved around. I had a poster of Marilyn Monroe jump off my wall. It was like 6 o’clock, I think I was sixteen, and it just flew off the wall and into the middle of the floor. I grew up in a really religious family: southern Baptist; so that was all something of the Devil, although I don’t believe that now.

“There was another visible entity that used to show up. It was black, sort of shapeless, but had these enormous eyes, kind of like the quintessential way we depict aliens. The great big eyes, but they were silvery with no pupil. They had a reflective quality. Again, it would be 3 o’clock in the morning and I would feel my bed jolt. And I would look down and see those eyes, right over the edge of my bed, and the black shapelessness around it. I turned on the light once I got my courage up. I thought: if I don’t move it’s going to kill me, and if I do move it’s going to kill me. Again, I was sixteen or seventeen. I screamed for my mom. I just told her I had a nightmare. But then I saw it again; one morning I was getting ready to go to school and I turned toward the shower and I could see the eyes looking between the hooks on the shower curtain.

“The final time this thing ever appeared I didn’t see it. I had a friend sleeping over, a senior in high school. She had never been to my house and I had never told her about any of this kind of stuff. She was very religious; didn’t really believe in any of this or would have said it was the Devil. We’re up the next morning, and she was helping me make my bed and I said: ‘It was a lot of fun; you should come back over.’ And she looked at me and said: ‘I’m sorry, I’m never gonna come back here.’

“I said: ‘What did I do?” She said: ‘You didn’t do anything. How do you not remember?’ I said: ‘I really don’t know what you’re talking about; you’ll have to tell me.’ She said she woke up suddenly during the night and she thought that she couldn’t see. Then, when her eyes adjusted, there was a face so close to hers that she couldn’t see anything else. I asked her what it looked like and she said the same thing: these big eyes and just black. She said she screamed so loud she figured she woke the whole neighborhood.

In addition to the grinning man, Christine perceived a shapeless being with enormous, alien eyes staring at her beside her bed.

“All I did, according to her, was lift up and sit up on my elbow and look at her and said: ‘Are you okay?’ And she said she

was and went back to sleep. My mom didn't hear it either. And, surely enough, she never came back to my house.

"I did have a person who would actually call me and talk to me while I was in high school. It may have just been some nut, but he seemed to know everywhere that I went. I took dance classes in Abilene and I had friends that lived there as well. And this person would call late at night and ask: 'How was your dance class?' He knew my every move, which was odd. They wouldn't tell me who they were. They knew a week's worth of my activities. I might have decided to see a friend and not had those plans prior. So, no one would know where I was going, but this person knew where I had been.

"The last time I saw him was in a dream when I was thirteen and it was like a lucid dream, and I was in a store, looking at a rack of magazines. And I turned and looked to my left and there he is, and he's got a magazine in his hand and staring right at me and grinning. And in the dream I put my magazine down and I walked right past him and told him: 'Don't ever come here again.' And he never did. That was the last time I saw him, physically or in a dream. I just decided, right there, in my dream I'm not having this anymore.

"I know that when I do think about him it does spur activity in my house.… I wonder how much of that is like energy that I'm putting out. I never had any sightings of UFO phenomena attached to it. There was one thing: I was driving home from Abilene one night—and there is an Air Force base in Abilene—and there was apparently an aircraft, although there were no lights on it. But it left a green, glowing vapor behind it and it was traveling really, really fast. But it could have been some kind of Air Force thing."

I walked right past him and told him: "Don't ever come here again." And he never did. That was the last time I saw him, physically or in a dream.

Steve Ash is a London, England-based writer and researcher on the world of the paranormal and has had a life-long interest in ufology. He says the following of his very own encounter with the Grinning Man:

"It was a bright morning sometime in the mid-1970s, probably around 8:30 A.M., most likely late Spring or perhaps early Autumn. I was thirteen and making my way to school. I'd been fascinated with the UFO phenomenon since my earlier childhood, after witnessing a couple of illuminated discs fly silently over my garden, in a precise synchronized trajectory. But I think the topic was still firmly in the entertainment zone for me then. After all, aliens that close—as I then conceived them—was a bit too scary a thought not to be dismissed as some ingenious advertising hoax. I knew little of aeronautics then. But it awoke a possibility for me, and I had soon devoured books by Jacques Vallée, Brad Steiger and John Keel, as well as further developing a love of science fiction. Therefore I was fully cognizant of the mythology before a perspective-changing event that was about to occur would nudge me into a new direction.

"A week earlier I had embarked with a friend on a school project, a mandatory requirement that term. The topic of my choice was unsurprisingly 'The Flying Saucer Mystery.' My year master was supportive and suggested we visit the South East London headquarters of BUFORA, which we had found in a local

telephone directory. We enthusiastically agreed, not least as it was a wonderful chance to bunk off school for the afternoon. The walk wasn't far, and after a short stop off at the local fish-and-chip shop we arrived at our destination. This turned out to be a suburban flat with no obvious sign of cuttingedge UFOlogical activity. We rang the doorbell and waited. But there was no reply. We rang again. A curtain twitched but no one answered the door. Disappointed we returned, to the fish-and-chip shop.

"A week later and I'm now contemplating this project as I walk down a long straight back street with only a few slight bends, giving a clear view off into the distance in both directions. It is strangely quiet, and I was the only traveler in the street, but then the road was not as busy as it is today, and it was early morning, so only in hindsight would this seem significant. In this distance I spy a man walking towards me. He's a long way off, a mere black silhouette. He gets closer, I note he is actually dressed entirely in black. My predictable speculation on this is at first a humorous one. I stop chuckling to myself as he gets closer, and I see a black suited figure in a pork pie hat, walking stiffly towards me. Slightly uneasy I rationalize that lots of people dress that way, and besides he's not wearing wraparound dark glasses. He gets very close and in my increasing apprehension I note the suit and hat ill fitting and the man is very pale, almost zombie like, and walks with a mechanical gait.

"We are about to pass in the empty street as I further notice his weird appearance, a gaunt, emaciated figure, with bulbous eyes, his black suit and black shirt crumpled, his black tie pulled into a tight knot, his too-small pork pie hat perched on a pale bald head. I resolve to stare ahead myself and ignore him as we pass. As we do I feel an irresistible urge to look at him. I turn my head, he gives me a huge insane grin, which seems to reveal a wired-up

mouth. His staring eyes are lit up with a disturbing glare. The look will be etched into my memory forever. At that stage I think I was aware of the grinning man and the corresponding reports of similar MIB.

I quicken my pass as he moves past me and behind, wanting to put as much distance as I can before turning to have another look. When I do a minute or so later the road is completely empty, there is not a trace of him or anyone else. I stop and wait a few moments and look down the street, scanning doorways, observing parked cars, listening carefully. Nothing.

“As I completed my journey I tried to rationalize the experience. Surely he was just a nut, he saw my alarm and capitalized on it. But where did he go and why did he look like what John Keel called ‘the Cadaver,’ one of the rarer manifestations of the MIB? Perhaps he hid in the bushes or dodged into a doorway or a parked car, yet I heard no doors open or close, and it was so quiet, certainly no car engine had started. He’d also walked a long way towards me, so what were the chances his destination was just beyond the point where we passed, slim to none I think. We were quite near an alley, but I am certain I had not reached it by the time we passed, though I had by the time I turned around; could he have doubled back? But all this seemed to indicate he was actively hiding, a disturbing thought in itself. I brushed the experience from my mind, but it constantly returned to haunt me.

The man in the black, disheveled suit has a way of simply staring at people in a very disturbing way.

"Since then I have analyzed the memory to exhaustion. Have I elaborated on it over time as is so common with old memories, added elements from my reading and partly fabricated it in reflection? I don't think so; the experience was so immanent and disturbing it was instantly embedded into my memory and I'm sure it happened pretty much as I remember it. Perhaps he was simply the hiding loon I had tried to dismiss him as; the world is full of strange people, and as I subsequently learned, many supposed MIB were just eccentrics or worse. But why encounter him a week after the visit to BUFORA? I'm a great believer in the 'Cosmic Joker,' that apparent influence behind random events and coincidences,

that seems to be having a laugh at our expense, but this seemed a little too much.

He was certainly strange; his wired-up mouth looked like he had the worst dental brace in history, or perhaps three of them, and he was clearly not in the best of health.

"Perhaps the visit was no coincidence? It's also likely that many MIB are hoaxers, often linked to UFO groups. But this happened near my home several miles from the scene of the visit, so how could they trace me? No one had followed us when we left the BUFORA address. Sure, we had school uniforms; our school was identifiable, but I doubt very much that the school would have given our addresses to enquirers, even before pedophile awareness! Unless they were officials. I briefly toyed with the theory the MIB were an elaborate stunt pulled off by Intelligence Agencies. Was BUFORA under surveillance, even infiltrated? But the idea that such an organization would then invest its time and resources in scaring a thirteen-year-old on his way to school exposed the absurdity of the idea. All that was left was coincidence.

"Yet there was something strange about the man—an aura, not of malice, however. I never felt threatened; it was a feeling of some dark humor. The stranger wanted to scare me and was enjoying it very much. Strangely it is this apparent dark humor, not dissimilar to my own, that today leaves me with almost a sense of affection, or at least of respectful awe. Even if it was a hoax or spontaneous prank it was a brilliant one. But there was also

something unworldly about him. Though perhaps now I am elaborating. He was certainly strange; his wired-up mouth looked like he had the worst dental brace in history, or perhaps three of them, and he was clearly not in the best of health. Years later I saw a picture of Conrad Veidt from The Man Who Laughs, also the inspiration for the Joker in Batman. The expression was identical.

"But what I also find interesting about this experience is that it marks the first time I took the whole UFOlogical phenomena seriously. If as is commonly thought, the MIB are silencers with an agenda to scare people away from the subject, he had an entirely opposite effect. But then so do the more obvious silencers for many people. There is a strange duplicity in the phenomena. Following this I became briefly obsessed with the UFO phenomenon as a teenager, an obsession that would lead to a fascination first with weird science and later with the occult. But perhaps most influentially with philosophy, a turn also encouraged by my subsequent reading of science fiction. This would lead to my eventual achievement of a Master's degree in the philosophy of science at a top university, something that I wonder would have been different had I not had this experience, my family being solidly working class with few if any ever attending university. Perhaps I attribute too much to these events, or perhaps not enough.

"This wasn't the last time I encountered the MIB, perhaps. Over two decades later, long after my UFO enthusiasm had waned in adulthood, and I had taken up more esoteric interests, I found myself called back to the subject my by classmate Clive, the very person with whom I had started that school project. He too had been affected by the experience, which had eventually led him to spiritualism long after I had lost contact with him. When we met again he was still enthused with UFOs and wanted me to join an

ambitious psychic circle to contact the intelligences behind the phenomena, which he still believed were extraterrestrial, a hypothesis I had abandoned long before.

"This is a story in itself, which I shall recount as part of a forthcoming book but shall pass over for now. What is relevant here is the attention this endeavor attracted. It was widely advertised in the usual magazines, so it should not have surprised us that it attracted odd phone calls from eccentrics and other interested parties. Clive maintains he was contacted at a bus stop by a man claiming to work for the M.O.D., who seemed unusually interested in him. Perhaps a coincidence. Less dismissible was the black car that slowly drove past his front door as we stood outside, and took our photograph with a flash, in broad daylight, before speeding off! Perhaps the source of this was different to my earlier experience, but like it, it fitted an established pattern of MIB behavior and reignited by curiosity in the whole subject.

Who visits a council flat, one of dozens in the block, on the top floor of an obscure council estate in the back of beyond, and asks for someone by their first name alone?

"Another possible encounter was indirect and almost comical. I had been involved with an esoteric group, with zero relation to the UFO phenomena about ten years after my experiences in Clive's psychic circle. We met in a friend's flat on the top floor of a council estate in a backstreet in East London. One evening there was a knock on the door, and our host answered it. I don't remember if we heard the conversation—it was a small flat—or if

it was relayed to us by the host, but the essence of it was that a couple of foreign-sounding men were asking for a person with the same first name as one of our five friends present (apparently no surname was given). The friend in question rejected this, saying it couldn't be him as he had told no one of his presence there that night, and so our host returned to the front door to inform them they had the wrong address.

"Meanwhile we discussed the strangeness of the event. Who visits a council flat, one of dozens in the block, on the top floor of an obscure council estate in the back of beyond, and asks for someone by their first name alone? At the time I jokingly commented something like 'It could be worse; they might have been all dressed in black!' But on the return of the host, he informed us that actually they were! This would become doubly strange when it was found that they did not seem to have visited any of the neighboring flats as far as could be ascertained! The guest in question decided not to return to that group afterwards.

"A final anecdote occurred around the same time. A friend of mine of long standing, whom I knew to have claimed psychic abilities, on hearing my school days experience, surprised me with the announcement that they were actually trained to locate an individual by remote viewing anywhere in the world from a photograph or even a drawing of the person. I was naturally curious and produced a sketch of the individual, to the best of my limited artistic ability, as well as supplementing a clear description. My friend focused on this, then suddenly broke off quite alarmed. They had located the 'individual,' but it was quite unlike anything they had ever experienced, and in fact quite disturbing, almost animalistic. They were clearly unnerved by the experience and refused to try again.

"All of these accounts are isolated events of course and

should be treated as such, as they may have quite different ordinary explanations. But taken together they seem to me to form a pattern, whether a real one it is hard to say of course, but it is a pattern in perfect correlation with established MIB lore. This has brought me to the conclusion that there really is something very odd going on here and that the MIB phenomena cannot be easily dismissed as something prosaic or unreal.

"So what do I think now after nearly twenty-five years of studying and investigating the MIB phenomena on and off? Well, my full conclusions will be presented in a chapter of my forthcoming book exploring the whole UFO mystery, but I will briefly state it here as it currently stands. The simple answer is extreme puzzlement.

There have been so many accounts of the Men in Black over the years that it is difficult to dismiss them all as mere hearsay or urban myth.

"To begin with, a critical investigation of the available

evidence is not very encouraging for anything but a skeptical opinion. I'm fairly convinced that the 'MIB' who visited Harold Dahl and others in the late 1940s were nothing more than government agents in typical dress code of the period. Likewise the handful of more impressive encounters with MIB reported by members of the IFSB in the early 1950s seem to be often attributable to an eccentric occultist and former security guard called Gordon Deller, who typically favored black attire and had pretensions of deep knowledge of UFOs, which he would only cautiously reveal to the chosen few. The rest seem to be rather tenuous impressions in an atmosphere of paranoia. Which really only leaves Albert Bender's astonishing account, and the paranoia it generated, which unfortunately varies over time, between something which sounds like more government agents snooping around to something distinctly supernatural, on different tellings.

"Furthermore: Grey Barker's role in the creation of whole 'mythos' is decidedly suspicious, particularly given his predilection for hoaxing. It is in fact very easy to dismiss the entire phenomenon of the '40s and '50s as misidentification and hoax.

"The '60s, however, are slightly different; some genuinely strange encounters are recorded, but even here the whole phenomenon is conditioned by and rooted in the dubious foundations of the 1950s. At least one famous MIB of this period, Tiny, now appears to have been identified as a man with severe mental and physical health issues and an obsession with UFOs and vampires (although he does appear to have been working with other people who stayed in the shadows). All this is not helped by the lack of a serious scientific study and the sensational hack writing associated with it.

"On the other hand some of the accounts, particularly those from John Keel, do seem a lot harder to account for, even given

Keel's alleged 'investigative gullibility' and 'journalistic elaborations.' There are sometimes hints of a well-funded intelligence operation, but to what purpose remains a mystery. Yet other accounts, assuming they actually happened as told, seem distinctly paranormal. The only thing that seems clear is they are not from outer space!

"On the strength of the known evidence alone I think I would be tempted to dismiss the whole thing as nonsense, if it was not for my own experiences, which put me in a strange cognitive space between personal empirical evidence and a negative rational analysis. Assuming my intuitions about my own experiences are true, then I can only say the phenomenon is very subtle and very well hidden, something pretty impressive in itself.

"John Keel's classification of the MIB is particular interesting given my experience with something very like 'the Cadaver.' Unfortunately, I have never experienced anything remotely like the Oriental MIB, who he argued were the most common of the 'mystery men' (that is if we dismiss the more Caucasian types as cranks and hoaxers, or even agents of some incredibly secret government agency, which Keel didn't entirely), but given one apparently correct hit I am inclined to respect the other!

"There is a serious problem with such categories and classification however. The classic MIB is in fact a generalization of many individual cases, with some similarities but also many differences between them. Both mythos exposed witnesses and investigators alike and tend to focus on the similarities and ignore the differences. This tends to generate idealized descriptions which real encounters rarely accord with completely. Even Keel's more specific categories and differentiations, though well researched, are not accompanied by his presentation of a list of identical encounters; they are an approximation taken from a limited

number of partial descriptions and possibly Keel's own experiences. But perhaps we can't really expect more, given the subjective nature of human perception and the vagaries of witness testimony even in established crimes. Given my experiences I'm inclined to take Keel's account at face value, though I think his attempts to show the MIB have been present for centuries are somewhat interpretationally subjective and less impressive.

The classic MIB is in fact a generalization of many individual cases, with some similarities but also many differences between them.

"There are a number of leads to follow in MIB research, but they tend to lead off into strange tangents. One of the strangest was from a source John Keel kept anonymous, who claimed the MIB were from the 'Nation of the third eye,' and their symbols were the 'eye in the triangle' and the 'lightning flash,' a claim that has never been repeated as far as I know. The latter symbol recalls to mind the Neo-Nazi rants that have been uttered by one or two supposed MIB (the fake Tiny was fond of praising Hitler too, so perhaps this goes with the pathology).

"At the opposite end of the scale several mystery men encounters in rural areas have been associated with gypsies or indigenous peoples who imply they have some secret occult association. Something not beyond the bounds of possibility given the interest some native shamen express in UFOs. On the other hand, Keel claimed the vampires of the Balkans as closely related to his MIB. Others, including myself, have sometimes wondered if the MIB are actually time travelers, given their timeless sartorial

style and their brand new vintage cars, or even something like the Agents from The Matrix. But all these leads fail to go very far and most seem to be dead ends. One thing that does seem clear however is that the MIB are not simply interested in UFOs; they are interested in all paranormal phenomena. In fact quite often they seem to be part of that phenomena. But we don't really have enough data to draw any definitive conclusions from all this.

"My own preliminary conclusion is that the MIB phenomena as a whole is a myth based on a range of diverse causes, from which an urban folklore and paranoid fantasy has been generated. However, within that myth I think there is a very real and mysterious phenomenon that is either paranormal or based on some technology beyond our current knowledge, whether human or non-human. But what is most surprising about this is that the core phenomena seems to be either consciously hiding within the smokescreen of this broader myth (perhaps even assisting its formation), or is an intelligent phenomenon actually shaped by that myth. I think as with the UFO phenomena in general this gives it a very important place in any scientific investigation of reality and our position in the cosmos."

This ends Steve Ash's extraordinary account.

In 1987, the Maxwell family spent a week vacationing in and around San Francisco, staying with friends in Menlo Park. On their way back home, they traveled along California's famous Highway 101, which provides a panoramic view of the Pacific Ocean for mile upon mile. They chose to drive through the night, when the highway would be at its least busy, thinking that it would be to their benefit to do so. How completely and utterly wrong they

were. As fate would destine to have it, after a couple of hours of driving, the family of four spotted a strange light in the sky. It was described as a bright green ball of light about the size of a beach ball, one that paced their car and stayed with them for a couple of miles at a height of around sixty feet. Nothing was frightening about the encounter. Rather, they were all amazed and excited. It wasn't long, however, before things got very disturbing.

The day after the Maxwell family got home was a Sunday, meaning they had an extra day before returning to work and school. It was while one of the teenaged children was sitting on the porch playing music on an old Walkman that she caught sight of a man on the other side of the road. He was dressed completely in black aside from a white shirt. He even wore black gloves on what was a bright, summery day. The girl was particularly disturbed by the fact that the man sported a weird grin and was staring right at her. So unsettled was she that she went back into the home and told her father of what had just happened. He quickly went to the door, but—no surprise—the Grinning Man was gone.

When Mr. Maxwell told the story to me—over the phone on January 3—the anxiety in his voice was as clear as it was eerie to hear. I have seen and heard that kind of anxiety so many times. Too many times, I would suggest—and, regardless of the particular location, almost always in relation to the Men in Black.

HAIRY LITTLE MEN

A number of reports suggest that Bigfoot entities come from worlds and galaxies far away—but not from our world or anywhere near it. We're talking about aliens of the hairy kind but seen right here on our planet. Perhaps the best examples of this particularly mystifying aspect of the phenomenon are those that occurred in Venezuela back in late 1954.

So far as can be determined, the controversy—which very quickly became a matter dominated by nothing but cold, unrelenting terror—began sometime after midnight on November 28. All was normal for José Ponce and Gustavo Gonzalez as they traveled along a small road on the fringes of Caracas, Venezuela—or, to be absolutely accurate, all was normal for a while. The dark road was suddenly lit up by what the astonished pair could only

describe as a bright ball of light with a circumference of around three feet. It swayed slightly in the air, not unlike a small boat bobbing along on the water.

The two slowed down their vehicle as they approached it, eventually coming to a complete halt. It was then, suddenly, that astonishment was replaced by outright terror. While Ponce stayed inside the van, Gonzalez cautiously exited the vehicle; he began to slowly and tentatively walk toward the hovering globe. Suddenly, Gonzalez found himself thrown to the ground by an unseen force. The reason why the attacker was unseen—for a few seconds, at least—was because of its size, or, rather, its profound lack of size. Gonzalez, to his shock and fear, was finally able to see what had assaulted him: a small, hair-covered creature that was built like a man but which was only around three feet in height. Acting on impulse and adrenaline, Gonzalez attempted to plunge his knife into the body of the creature, only for the knife to bounce off it.

In mere seconds, another hairy dwarf was on the scene and temporarily blinded Gonzalez with a bright light that emitted from a powerful, flashlight-type device. Shocked to the core, Ponce gathered his wits together and jumped out of the van to help his friend, who was stumbling around, his eyesight still affected by the powerful beam that hit him with full force. To Ponce's growing concern, two more of the hairy creatures surfaced out of the shadows, both making their way toward the men—armed, no less, with large rocks.

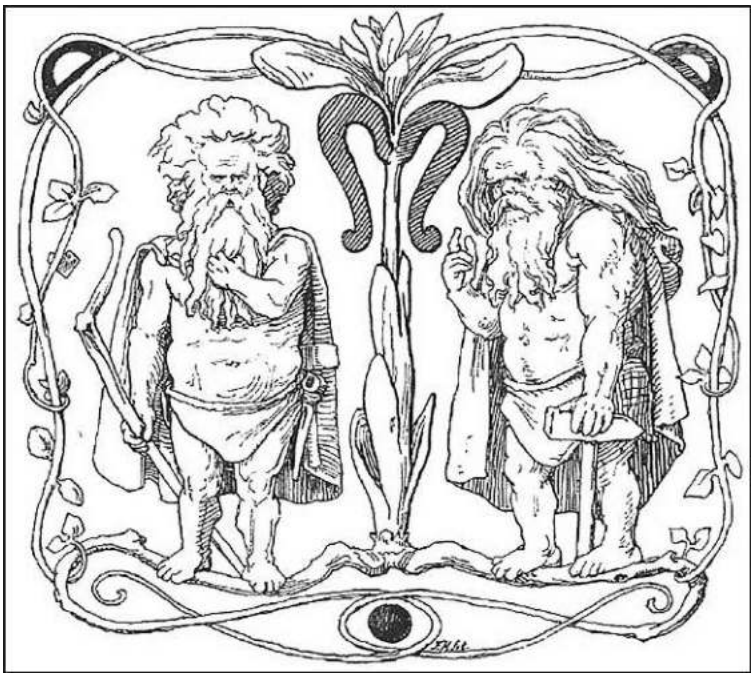
Although the presence of the rocks suggested to the men that the hairy things were ready to kill them, in hindsight, it seems that they were only a defensive measure in the event that a last resort-style situation developed. Fortunately, it did not. The small things raced to the ball of light and, some-how, launched themselves inside it despite its equally small size and vanished in the blink of

an eye!

It could have been a risky situation, but both men felt they had no choice but to report to the authorities what had happened. Ponce drove wildly to the nearest police station, where a police doctor (who, as good fortune would have it, witnessed part of the confrontation) examined both men and found a deep gash on Gonzalez's torso—which, it was assumed, was inflicted when the creature knocked him to the ground. That was hardly the end of things, however.

Twelve days later, on December 12, a pair of hunters, Jesus Gomez and Lorenzo Flores, were out hunting when the tables were definitively turned and they became prey for something wild. The location was an apt one: thick woods and overgrown fields, the type of place where anything could have lurked—and it did! As with Gonzales and Ponce two weeks previously, Gomez and Flores first encountered some form of small UFO, described as being like two wash basins on top of one another.

Despite the small size of the vehicle, four hairy creatures leapt out and immediately tried to drag near-hysterical Gomez to the craft. Flores lashed out at one of the beasts with his unfortunately unloaded shotgun, only for it to shatter into pieces when it hit the near-armor-plated-like body of the animal. Following that was a brief fight for life as the pair did their utmost not to fall victim to the freakish foursome. Finally, the hairy aliens—if that's what they were—retreated to the vehicle, jumped aboard, and soared away into the night sky. Like Gonzalez back in November, they bore the marks of the attack: deep scratches and violently torn clothing.



This 1895 illustration from Den Êldre Eddas Gude-sange depicts dwarfs as small, rather barbaric people, a bit like the ones encountered by a pair of hapless travelers in Venezuela.

Six days later, the San Carlos del Zulia area of Venezuela was hit by the marauding minifoot. Jesus Paz was a passenger in a vehicle who needed to empty his bladder at just about the worst time possible. He did not know it at the time, however, but something was waiting, something ready to pounce. Paz headed for the privacy of a bunch of thick bushes while his friends waited in the vehicle.

Suddenly, the air was filled with the sounds of terrible screams. Paz's friends wasted no time in exiting the car and racing to the bushes. To their horror, Paz was lying on the grass, unconscious and covered in cuts and gashes. As they focused their attention on Paz, a small, hairy humanoid raced out of the bushes, headed toward a small UFO of the kind that all the previous witnesses had described, and soared away into the heavens.

Fortunately, none of the witnesses of the three attacks had any

lasting effects. It was a unique series of events, the likes of which have seldom been seen before or since. The matter of the hairy dwarves of Venezuela remains the conundrum it was back in 1954. Whether highly advanced creatures from our very own planet—but living in stealth among us—or vicious, primitive-looking creatures from the stars, we will likely never know.

Something else we will likely never know, too, is whether the near-deadly, predatory dwarves had success in kidnapping, and possibly killing, others who may have been unfortunate enough to have encountered them late at night on lonely, dark stretches of Venezuelan road. It's important to note, too, that such creatures have been seen elsewhere.

The possibility that one location should have in its midst no fewer than two cryptid apes may sound unlikely until one realizes that the Philippines are actually composed of more than seven thousand islands, many of them rarely visited. On various islands in the area, reports come of the Kibaan. Child-sized, covered in hair, and sporting gold-colored fangs, they like nothing better than to relax in trees and strum guitarlike instruments that they fashion out of local trees! Also, like so many hair-covered apes of unknown kinds, the Kibaan are reputed to have backward-facing feet.

Child-sized, covered in hair, and sporting gold-colored fangs, they like nothing better than to relax in trees and strum guitarlike instruments that they fashion out of local trees!

Of course, all of this collectively sounds like a creature born out of folklore and mythology rather than history and reality. As with most folklore and mythology, however, a nugget of truth usually can be found when one goes looking for it. That applies to the Kibaan, too.

It's very possible that the folkloric Kibaan may actually have been something known as the Amomongo. Whereas the physical appearance and actions of the Kibaan sound most unlikely (particularly so in terms of its musical prowess!), the possibility of the creatures being Amomongo sounds much more tangible and plausible.

By just about all accounts, it's a monkey that walks upright and stands around five feet in height. Unlike some of its more placid cousins around the world, the Amomongo are downright violent and even murderous. As a perfect example, in June 2008, controversial reports surfaced out of La Castellana in the Philippine province of Negros Occidental. Both farm animals and people were reportedly attacked by the fast-running, muscular beast, which spent most of its time lurking around the base of the eight-thousand-foot-high, still active Kanlaon Volcano.

Between June 9 and 10, a number of people were attacked by a marauding, hair-covered hominid that tore into the flesh of its victims with razorsharp claws. Elias Galvez and Salvador Aguilar were two of the fortunate ones; they managed to escape from the clutches of the beast but not before suffering from deep lacerations. As is so often the case in such incidents, the wave of Amomongo attacks ended as mysteriously, and as quickly, as it began.

Given the fact that more than a few worldwide reports exist of hair-covered, dwarfish, ape- and monkey-like animals on record, the following account—from the Anthropological Institute Journal of 1876—may be of deep significance and relevance:

"An ancient graveyard of vast proportions has been found in Coffee County. It is similar to those found in White County and other places in middle Tennessee, but is vastly more extensive, and shows that the race of pygmies who once inhabited this country were very numerous. The same peculiarities of position observed in the White County graves are found in these. The writer of the letter says: 'Some considerable excitement and curiosity took place a few days since, near Hilsboro, Coffee County, on James Brown's farm. A man was ploughing in a field which had been cultivated many years, and ploughed up a man's skull and other bones. After making further examination they found that there were about six acres in the graveyard. They were buried in a sitting or standing position. The bones show that they were a dwarf tribe of people, about three feet high. It is estimated that there were about 75,000 to 100,000 buried there. This shows that this county was inhabited hundreds of years ago."

In 2004, a remarkable discovery was made in Flores, an island situated east of Komodo, home to the huge, deadly, and fearsome Komodo dragon. It was a discovery of what appeared to be a small human but which some researchers believed may have been the impetus for the tales of the mysterious ape called Orang-pendek. In a specially prepared report, cryptozoologist Richard Freeman

tells the story and reveals the truth of the Orang-pendek angle.

Freeman reveals the remarkable facts:

“Some theorize that the Orang-pendek may be a small hominian. As far back as the 1940s William Charles Osman Hill, primatologist, zoologist, and anatomist, postulated that Orang-pendek might have a possible connection to the fossils of Homo erectus. Along with the Nittaewo of Sri Lanka, he believed that they might be a dwarf island form of Homo erectus. Island dwarfism occurs when a species colonizes an island smaller than the landmass from whence it came. With fewer resources the species’ descendants evolve into a smaller species.

“The notion of a tiny island hominian was proven in a spectacular manner in 2004. Australian paleontologist Mike Morwood was excavating the Liang Bua cave in the west of Flores when he made a remarkable discovery, an adult skull of a human-like creature, but of tiny proportions. Further excavations uncovered more of the skeleton and a number of other individuals. Most incredibly of all, the remains were not fossilized. Their constitution was likened to wet tissue paper. The bones had to be allowed to dry before they could be excavated. Besides the creatures were tools, weapons, and evidence of fire use.

“The creatures were named Homo floresiensis and in life would have stood only one meter tall. Despite having a smaller cranial capacity than a chimpanzee, it seems that Homo floresiensis was highly intelligent. Not only did it use fire and stone tools, it seems to have hunted pygmy stegodont elephants and giant rodents with which it shared its island home.

An artist's depiction of the Orang-pendek, a cryptid ape said to live in Sumatra.

"Some tried to discredit the find as nothing more than microcephalic examples of modern man. This theory is quite absurd as the skull of Homo floresiensis are rounded and not elongate or proportionately tiny in the way microcephalics invariably are. Neither could microcephalics produce the tools that the remains were found alongside. Finally, the idea of a number of microcephalics, a rare condition as it is, all being found in the same cave is patently absurd.

"In general, life expectancy for individuals with microcephaly is reduced and the prognosis for normal brain function is poor. The prognosis varies depending on the presence of associated abnormalities.

"Recent work seems to suggest that Homo floresiensis is even more incredible than we first thought. It now seems that, rather

than being a descendent of Homo erectus as originally postulated, but outside of the genus Homo and more closely related to the African Australopithecus. The last known Australopithecus, Australopithecus africanus died out 1.9 million years ago.

“It seems that the Liang Bua population of Homo floresiensis was killed during the eruption of a volcano around 12,000 years ago. But anthropologist Gregory Forth and others have suggested that Homo floresiensis survived in other parts of Flores until recently and may have been the genesis of the Ebu gogo legends.

“Indeed, the Ebu gogo is said to survive in the deep jungles of Flores even today. The legend of the Ebu gogo’s destruction by fire may be a distorted retelling of real events. Around 1830 a volcano known as Ebu Lobo erupted, spewing lava for a distance of 4km. The date matches fairly well with the date that the Ebu gogo were supposedly destroyed. Could the localized eruption have killed off a late surviving population of Homo floresiensis or have forced them away from the area, leading to the folktale?

“It seems quite possible that Homo floresiensis and the Ebu gogo are one and the same as are the other Flores creatures known under different names. It is also perfectly possible that Homo floresiensis is still alive and well on Flores and on other Indonesian islands.

“When it was first discovered, many people made the link between Homo floresiensis and the Orang-pendek. Debbie Martyr told me of stories from Sumatra of a race of tiny hairy people. They used tools and fire and lived only in the very deep jungle. But here is the catch, the native people knew them to be totally distinct from the Orang-pendek.

“These little people were smaller than Orang-pendek and though hairy, they were much less ape-like. Unlike Orang-pendek

they fashioned tools, used fires and lived in small tribes. Orang-pendek has no use of fire. It may use sticks as weapons but—as far as we know—it does not seem to fashion tools. Furthermore, it is solitary.

When it was first discovered, many people made the link between Homo floresiensis and the Orangpendek.

"Homo floresiensis and Orang-pendek do not match up well. The latter is larger, more primitive, and more solidly built. All of the tracks I have seen of the Orang-pendek show an offset big toe, a feature indicative of an ape. All the eye-witness descriptions seem to be recalling an upright ape and not a hominian."

The Republic of Kenya is found in East Africa and can boast of being home to more than a few kinds of unidentified, and unacknowledged, apes. Mount Kilimanjaro is the dwelling of the dwarfish Wa-mbilikimo, a hairy man-beast with a head of flowing locks. Perhaps related to the Wa-mbilikimos are the Dokos of Lake Turkana, stories of which surfaced in the nineteenth century. The fact that the Dokos reportedly had their own form of religion suggests that they were far more evolved than the average ape—or, quite possibly, were an unknown form of human.

The Maus of Kenya's Mau Escarpment, which runs along Kenya's Great Rift Valley, sound like a combination of both the Dokos and the Wa-mbilikimos. Short and hairy, they seem to

possess profoundly human traits despite their primitive, animal-like appearances. This is made clear by their reported use of rudimentary tools and fire and their odd obsession with herding cattle.

One of the most significant accounts of the Mau people came from big game hunter Roger Courtney. In his 1940 book The Greenhorn in Africa, he related a number of accounts of sightings of, and confrontations with, the Maus—or "Mau Men," as Courtney was told they were also called. Courtney said that one of his interviewees "went on to tell how his own father, who was driving his sheep to pasture on the slopes of Mount Longenot, fell into the hands of these gnomes when he went into a cave, following the trail of blood left by one of his sheep that had been stolen. He was stunned from behind, and when he came round he found he was surrounded by strange little creatures."

Courtney added that his source related his father's further words as follows:

"The Mau men were lower even than those little people of the forests for, though they had no tails that I could see, they were as the monkeys that swing in the forest trees. Their skins were white, with the whiteness of the belly of a lizard, and their faces and bodies were covered with long, black hair."

Now moving on to the United Kingdom.…

Wirt Sykes was U.S. consul to Wales, a noted expert on Welsh folklore, and the author of an acclaimed 1880 book, British Goblins. In its pages, Sikes wrote of the hairy, little Bwbach that it "is the good-natured goblin which does good turns for the tidy Welsh maid who wins its favour by a certain course of behaviour

recommended by long tradition. The maid having swept the kitchen, makes a good fire the last thing at night, and having put the churn, filled with cream, on the whitened hearth, with a basin of fresh cream for the Bwbach on the hob, goes to bed to await the event. In the morning she finds (if she is in luck) that the Bwbach has emptied the basin of cream, and plied the churn-dasher so well that the maid has but to give a thump or two to bring the butter in a great lump. Like the Ellyll which it so much resembles, the Bwbach does not approve of dissenters and their ways, and especially strong is its aversion to total abstainers."

A Bwbach is basically a Welsh version of a goblin or brownie (illustration

by Arthur Rackham).

The Bwbach is largely forgotten today, but encounters with small, hairy, manlike figures in Britain are certainly not—as we saw in the Horsham, Sussex, case of 1948 as detailed in an earlier chapter by Neil Arnold. Jon Downes says of such matters: "I have many similar reports of such creatures being seen in Devonshire woodland. And the following one is a real cracker because it has so much separate and credible corroboration to it.…"

The location, Downes reveals, was Churston Woods, which is situated close to the English holiday resort of Torbay: "Over a six week period, in the summer of 1996, fifteen separate witnesses reported seeing what they could only describe as a green faced monkey, running through the woods. Granted, some of the descriptions were quite vague, but most of the witnesses told of seeing a tailless animal, around four to five feet tall, with a flat, olive-green face that would run through the woods and occasionally would be seen swinging through the trees. Now, to me at least, this sounds like some form of primitive human, but again, of course, such things simply cannot exist in this country—and yet they seem to. And this area—Devon, Somerset and Cornwall—is rich with such tales, you know."

For what it's worth, an update to this saga surfaced a decade and a half after the Churston woods controversy subsided. Back in 2011, I highlighted on one of my blogs a photograph that was mailed anonymously to me back in the early to mid-1990s, if memory serves me correctly, which I think it does. Anyway, after publishing the picture on the Internet, I ended up getting a very weird, late-night phone call in February 2012 from someone who claimed it was a legitimate picture of none other than the green-faced monkey of Churston woods. How they knew this was not

revealed, and no further data—beyond a slightly absurd, Deep Throat-like message warning me not to meddle with "the beast"—was revealed. Frankly, I think it looks like a cross between Donald Duck, the Dover Demon, and some discarded leftover from a 1970s-era episode of Dr. Who. You may very well agree!

The "something" he saw ran into the road, stopped, and then ran back into the trees. He described it as a "little green man."

"It all started in the late 1950s," began Jason Hill when he related the details to me in 2008. "My dad was visiting a friend in Heath Hayes [a town very close to Cannock Chase, Staffordshire]. This friend sadly died in the early 1990s; so I am afraid the details are secondhand. Even so, my dad is not the sort of person for tall tales; and the details he repeated to me last Sunday were the same as he told me thirty plus years ago. It was back in 1959 and dad was at his mate's house talking when his friend's mother pipes up: 'Look! In the newspaper: your little green man!' The newspaper story—dad thinks it was the Express & Star or the Cannock Advertiser—told of a little girl from Pye Green [an area of Cannock] running back home to her mother in tears.…

"When questioned," Jason added, "she said a little green man had run from the undergrowth and frightened her. Dad waited his chance and raised the question. His friend, who was very embarrassed, said that in the summer of 1958 he played cricket for GEC [the General Electric Corporation] at Stafford, his place of work, and cycled back home, later than normal across the Cannock chase. On a weaving part of the road he saw something

in the headlight of his cycle. The ‘something’ he saw ran into the road, stopped, and then ran back into the trees. He described it as a ‘little green man.’

“When I first heard it, at the age of nine or ten, I thought it was great; but I grew up and thought it was a pile of rubbish—until a conversation with a friend about strange creatures on the Chase revealed he had a story to tell. Driving past the German Cemetery he felt something fall on the back of the car, like a big branch from an overhanging tree. He looked in the mirror and for a split second saw what he described as a ‘gremlin or sprite,’ little and hairy.

“The more I think about it, the less it makes sense and seems logical. In fact, if I had thought it through, I probably would not have contacted you. But somewhere in a fifty-year-old story that has stood the test of time, and a twenty year old version, lies something. But what?”

It should be noted that the Cannock Chase has a long history of UFO encounters, including crop circles, alien abductions, and confrontations with the dreaded Men in Black. A coincidence? Surely not.

In November 2008, an extremely strange story surfaced from Wanstead, a suburban area of the borough of London. According to witness testimony, a small, Bigfoot-type creature was supposedly seen wandering in Epping Forest, a 2,476-hectare area of forest land which, by name at least, was first referenced in the seventeenth century but has existed since Neolithic times and, in the twelfth century, was designated as a Royal Forest by King Henry III.

Neil Arnold describes how the distinctly odd story began: "The animal was first sighted during early November by eighteen-year-old angler Michael Kent who was fishing with his brother and father in the Hollow Ponds area of Epping Forest, on the border of Wanstead and Leytonstone. The teenager claimed that whilst walking towards his brothers, he heard a rustling in the bushes and saw the back of a dark, hairy animal around four feet in height, that scampered off into the woods.

"Another of those that caught sight of the diminutive beast was Irene Dainty, who claimed a face to face encounter with the thing on Love Lane, Woodford Bridge. She told the press: 'I had just come out of my flat and just as I had turned the corner I saw this hairy thing come out of nowhere. I really don't want to see it again. It was about four feet tall and with really big feet and looked straight at me with animal eyes. Then it leaped straight over the wall with no trouble at all and went off into the garden of the Three Jolly Wheelers pub. I was so terrified that I went to my neighbour's house and told her what had happened. She couldn't believe it and asked me if I had been drinking, but I said of course I hadn't—it was only about 3:00 P.M.'"

Further reports subsequently surfaced, some of which were far more of a four-legged variety, maybe even bearlike rather than actually being suggestive of Bigfoot, but it was this issue of the "really big feet" that kept the media-driven controversy focused on matters of a mini-Sasquatch-type nature. Ultimately, just like so many similar such affairs, sightings of the beast came to an abrupt end, and the matter of the Epping Forest monster was never satisfactorily resolved.

HAT MAN HORROR

Jason Offutt is an expert on a disturbing, Man in Black-type phenomenon called the Hat Man. He shares with us thoughts on this eerie entity that almost exclusively surfaces at night and that torments people primarily in their bedrooms. Offutt tells us: A dark figure lurks in the shadows watching. Something about him is out of place. The Humphrey Bogart suit? The dark, obscured features? Maybe it's the hat. Not a ball cap, not a driving cap, but a fedora. This figure looks like it stepped out from a 1940s detective magazine. Then it raises a hand or takes a step; its movements are awkward, exaggerated. Something is wrong with this man—dangerously wrong. This description of a man in an out-of-date suit wearing an out-of-date hat is common in the paranormal field, stretching across the line of the UFO-fixated Men in Black and the

darker, more shadowy Hat Man.

Men in Black, first reported in author and UFO researcher Grey Barker's 1956 book They Knew Too Much about Flying Saucers, are described as thin men, often exhibiting behavior that doesn't fit with society. They wear sunglasses, old-fashioned black suits or out-of-place clothing, and they harass people who have UFO encounters. Some MIBs confront abductees as government agents, others claim to be aliens, and still others just make their presence known.

Gil once worked as a guard at the now decommissioned state penitentiary in Jefferson City, Missouri, and has tried for years to convince the world that the former prison is a hub of UFO activity. "I've seen so many UFOs," he said. One night while he was calling bingo in nearby Columbia, Missouri, three strange men walked into the game room and stared at Gil.

"All were dressed in black suits," he said. "All were about the same size. Same kind of shirt, same kind of tie." Also, they wore the same hat. Gil soon lost them in the crowd. During cleanup, Gil asked if anyone had seen these men; no one had, but Gil knew that he'd seen the Men in Black for one reason—they wanted him to know that they were watching.

This type of Men in Black encounter is typical, but what of the Hat Man, an entity whose features are masked in shadow and appearance often described as two-dimensional, like a peel-off sticker on a child's cheap dollhouse?

Like the Men in Black, the Hat Man has floated in the periphery of our lives for decades, observing our movements, occasionally interacting with us, but always threatening. Charles was thirteen years old in 1949 and lived with his mother, brother, and grandmother in San Jose, California, when the Hat Man crept

into his life. He lay in bed with his brother, talking before they drifted off to sleep, when the window sash moved. “A dark figure dressed in a black cloak and wearing a black hat with a wide brim appeared in the window,” Charles said. “No facial features were discernible on this person, but I took it to be a man.” This Hat Man opened the window and reached through with both hands. “I thought he was going to climb in,” Charles said. “At that moment I started yelling my head off.” As Charles’s young voice pierced the night, the Hat Man closed the window, turned, and disappeared from sight. The next morning, Charles saw that the window was locked from the inside. “I saw something,” Charles said. “What in the hell was it?”

People have reported the Hat Man from England to Brazil, from Australia to California. From eyewitness reports, this entity can be either solid or vapor, a waking nightmare or a sleep disorder, a real entity or the result of electric stimulation to the brain. Because the Hat Man is described as more ethereal than Men in Black, many explanations are possible as to whether these are entities or something psychological.

Sleep Paralysis: Hormones in REM sleep paralyze the major muscle groups. When people suddenly wake, the hormones stay in their bodies for up to 8 minutes. During this time, they can feel pressure on their chests and can see people who seem real. This feeling is also known as Old Hag Syndrome and, according to psychology, is fairly common.

The Hat Man—a creepy, shadowy figure looming and sneaking about in the darkness—has been reported by witnesses all across the world.

Archetype: Since the first black-and-white gangster movies, the media has programmed us to fear figures in dark suits and fedoras, so in the dim silence of the night, a coat rack in an unfamiliar room may appear to us as a Hat Man.

Tricking the Brain: Electronic stimuli to certain sections of the brain and tricks of light and shadow have been shown by scientific testing to make people see this dark figure.

Ghosts: Many paranormal investigators and psychics consider the Hat Man to be nothing more than earth-bound spirits reflecting their appearance in life.

Demons: According to a Catholic exorcist, demons can

manifest themselves in the form of this shadowy entity, sometimes with glowing red eyes, as some Hat Men are described as having.

Omens: The Hat Man is also associated with impending doom. People have reported seeing a Hat Man looming in the shadows before the onset of some tragedy, such as an accident, a major disaster, or a death.

Dimensional Travelers: Some speculate that Hat Men are observing us from other dimensions, their shadow persona being only our perception of what these people look like in their own world.

Extraterrestrials: A growing number of people are placing the Hat Man into the realm of extraterrestrial contact because of the similarities in the encounters, such as silently entering bedrooms at night, paralyzing those who see them, and sometimes feeding upon their energy. These entities, like E.T. encounters, seem to visit the same people time after time.

People like Cody.

The Cowboy, a black, human-shaped figure, featureless except for a hat—a fedora with a wide brim—has followed Cody for years. Cody spent most of his childhood cowering under the covers as this Hat Man paced through the bedroom he shared with his brother. "We called him the Cowboy because he kind of looked like the Marlboro man," Cody said. The visits stopped during Cody's senior year in high school; then, in 2011, the Cowboy returned.

"My car started acting up," he said. "I'm in the process of looking for a job, finding an apartment, buying an engagement ring. I had a lot of stuff on my plate, which might have brought on what happened." What happened was the Cowboy. "I'm sitting in my car on the phone with my mom," Cody said. As he described

the car's behavior to his mother, he noticed a movement in the corner of his right eye. Cody turned toward the passenger-side window and saw it—the shadow man who tormented him in the night as a child. "It was full on. A shadow person in an old fedora," Cody said. "It was standing there. It leaned over like it's bending to look at me." As Cody stared in horror, the Cowboy reached out its arm and knocked on the car window. "It knocked two times," Cody said. "After it knocked it dissolved in my vision. It just showed up, knocked on my window and was gone." Cody wonders if the Cowboy wanted to let him know it was still around. "It's been quite some time since I saw him," he said. "I was feeling stressed out and I think he showed up just to feed on that."

Given the reports, Men in Black and the Hat Man are likely related only in casual appearance: the dark suit, the fedora, the awkward movements. However, whereas Men in Black talk, the Hat Man is silent. Men in Black appear within the norm of humanity (if not slightly pale, waxy, and thin), but the Hat Man appears two-dimensional, showing no features, just a deep, black silhouette. Men in Black are reported to appear at the doorstep of UFO witnesses, but the Hat Man appears to anyone at any time. These entities have similarities, but if they're related, it's only by their great taste in hats.

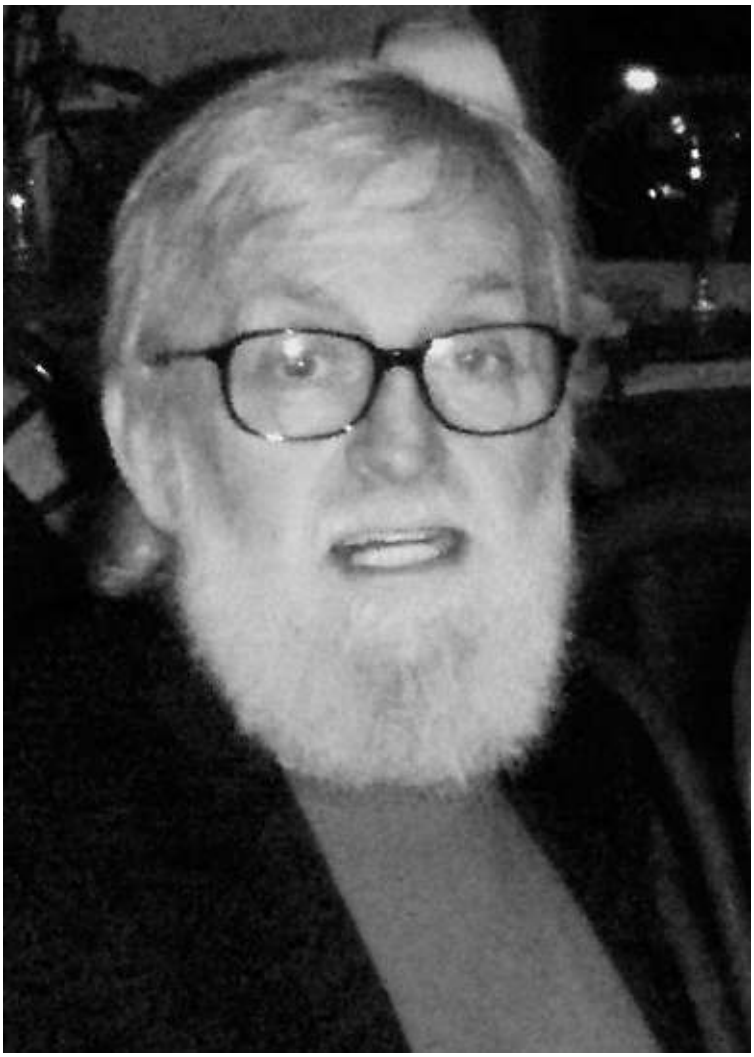
HUMAN-EATING EXTRATERRESTRIALS

Is it possible that aliens are not just visiting us, experimenting on us, and learning about us but also eating us? As disturbing and as nightmarish as it might sound, that may well be exactly what is happening. In the world of science fiction, such a thing has occurred in a fashion that mirrors some of the claims concerning what may be afoot in the real world. The 1985 movie Life-force was directed by horror legend Tobe Hooper, who also directed the groundbreaking 1974 movie The Texas Chainsaw Massacre and the acclaimed 1979 TV miniseries version of Stephen King's novel Salem's Lot.

The fact that the movie featured many well-known actors, including Patrick Stewart (who, in 1987, took on the role of

Captain Jean-Luc Picard in Star Trek: The Next Generation), should have made Lifeforce a big hit. Unfortunately, it was not a hit. Cinema-based earnings didn't even make back half of the $25 million budget that had been allocated for the production of the movie. That said, for zombie fanatics Lifeforce—based on Colin Wilson's novel The Space Vampires—should not be missed.

The movie begins in outer space in 1986, the year that Halley's Comet made its most recent appearance. A team of astronauts embark on a mission in a NASA space shuttle called the Churchill (named after British prime minister-Sir Winston Churchill) to rendezvous with the gigantic comet. On doing so, the crew is shocked to find that deep within Halley's Comet is a huge spacecraft of alien origins. Not only that, the ship is filled with numerous dead, winged monsters and three very human-looking beings: two men and one woman. Unbeknownst to the astronauts, the three entities are not, as is first suspected, fellow Homo sapiens that have been abducted by the gargoylelike creatures. They are one and the same. In other words, the aliens have the ability to morph into human form and back again. It isn't long before all three are secretly brought to London, England, for study at the fictional European Space Research Center. Despite being heavily guarded by British Army personnel, that's when the trouble begins.



Author Dan O'Bannon penned The Space Vampires, which was adapted into the film Lifeforce. It is a movie about aliens who want to suck the very souls out of humans.

Clearly not dead, the trio of nonhumans appears to be in a collective state of deep, suspended animation. Until, that is, they wake up. The woman, using what might be termed a form of extraterrestrial hypnotism, entrances one of the troops and—utterly naked—moves toward the man, seemingly to kiss him on the lips. This is no normal kiss, however. As the alien female embraces the soldier, she drains his body of its vital energy—the life-force, in other words, of the movie's title. His body falls to the ground as a

withered, shrunken husk, and the alien escapes from the facility. A couple of hours later, a shocking development occurs. While the military team overseeing the project—and acting to keep everything under wraps and away from the public and the media—tries to figure out what is afoot, word comes in that the body of a woman has been found in the woods nearby. She, too, is as withered as an old, leathery Egyptian mummy. When her body is brought to the space center for study, it reanimates—as does the body of the dead soldier. They, too, are now crazed, undead entities needing to feed on vital life energy. A doctor is then violently attacked and bitten. He also dies and returns as a savage monster. With the morphed alien on the loose, it's not long before London is engulfed in an epidemic, one in which the living first become the dead but who then mutate into something far worse.

In a neat twist, the team comes to believe that these energy-sucking aliens—and the people they infect—are responsible for our centuries-old legends and folklore of bloodsucking vampires, but in reality it's energy, not blood, that the reanimated so badly need, and they don't dress like cloaked Count Dracula, either. One hundred percent zombielike in appearance, the ragged dead rise up in violent style, rampaging around the streets of London in huge throngs, attacking the living, sucking them dry, and ensuring that their victims soon become marauding killers just like them. The fate of the entire human race is now precariously hanging in the balance. It's accurate and fair to say that Lifeforce is an unusual and highly alternative production that blends together three distinct genres that are generally kept poles apart from each other: zombies, vampires, and science fiction. Notably, however, all three are successfully fused into what is an entertaining—but unfortunately much underappreciated—storyline and movie.

Now let's move away from the world of science fiction and

into the world of UFO reality.

One of the strangest—and most disturbing—of all UFO stories on record came from the late Leonard Stringfield, who, during the Second World War and its immediate aftermath, was attached to the U.S. 5th Air Force in a military intelligence capacity. On August 28, 1945, and while flying in a C46 over Iwo Jima, Japan, at around ten thousand feet, Stringfield and the rest of the crew encountered a trio of teardrop-shaped UFOs that adversely affected the engines and navigation equipment of the aircraft and almost resulted in violent death for all aboard. Fortunately, as the UFOs exited the area, the pilot was able to regain control of the aircraft, and disaster was averted. It was this experience that led Stringfield to devote much of his postmilitary life to trying to unravel the complexities of the UFO mystery. Although Stringfield chiefly focused his investigations on reports of crashed UFOs held by the U.S. government, it was a case of a very different nature—one that was brought to Stringfield's attention in 1989—that really stands out in the fatal stakes.

It was this experience that led Stringfield to devote much of his postmilitary life to trying to unravel the complexities of the UFO mystery.

Stringfield's source for the story was a high-ranking military officer that Stringfield described as a wholly reliable individual who he had then known for several years. After some careful consideration, Stringfield's informant decided to come clean on a shocking event that reportedly occurred somewhere in Cambodia during the Vietnam War. It was April 1972, and an elite and highly

trained U.S. Army special-ops-type group, of which Stringfield's confidante was a member, found itself involved in nothing less than a violent and grisly confrontation with a group of extraterrestrials who can at best be called cosmic butchers.

When the events occurred, the team was making its careful and quiet way through a heavily forested area of Cambodia to an area of strategic importance. The location in question, it was suspected, was home to a North Vietnamese listening post that was actively intercepting classified U.S. military radio-based messages. Terminating the enemy outfit with extreme prejudice was very much the order of the day. Fate stepped in, however, and the order was never fulfilled. What did come to pass, however, was something far worse than anything the team could possibly have envisaged, even during the most violent of all confrontations with North Vietnamese troops.

As the unit reached a clearing, they were shocked to see sitting on the jungle floor, directly in front of them, a highly reflective, circular-shaped machine with a diameter of around fifty feet and tripod landing gear. Indeed, so brilliantly reflective was the craft, it practically acted as a mirror. Curiously, a deep hum emanated from the futuristic device, which provoked feelings of disorientation and nausea in some of the team, but that was not all; around the vehicle were a number of humanoid figures that could only be described as extraterrestrial: their heads were large and hairless, and their wraparound eyes were utterly black. It was not so much the appearance of the creatures that numbed the team to its core, though. Rather, it was what the aliens were doing: namely, systematically loading a number of human body parts and naked human corpses into large, metallic bins and sealing them tight. The bodies, said Stringfield's informant, were a mixture of what were considered to be Vietnamese and white and black American troops.

To its credit, the U.S. team kept its composure, quietly positioned itself among the surrounding foliage for cover, and wasted no time in opening fire on the bug-eyed body snatchers. For the most part, this proved to be utterly futile, as the creatures appeared to be protected by suits that were nearly completely armor plated. Nevertheless, one was said to have been killed by friendly fire and three by head shots. One of the troops reportedly lost his life, while several of the men were significantly burned by a "ray" type of weapon that was fired from within the UFO. With one death and several severe injuries, the team quickly backed away, at which point the aliens—seeing their chance—did likewise and ran for their craft. An opening appeared in its side, and the crew scrambled aboard while hauling the bins inside, too. The doorway suddenly closed, and the UFO took to the skies, accelerating at an incredible speed after it had cleared the lush jungle canopy. In seconds, it was out of sight.

During the Vietnam War, a unit of American soldiers came upon a clearing where there was a UFO and several aliens loading human bodies into the craft.

The traumatized team quickly radioed the camp at which they were stationed and explained the deadly nature of what had just taken place. It seems that the higher echelons of the military may have had previous knowledge of potentially similar events: when the facts were relayed, the uninjured members of the team were quickly flown to a military base in South Vietnam, where they were interrogated by a mysterious group of individuals that was comprised of intelligence agents rather than of military personnel. The surviving members of the unit were warned of the serious, and possibly fatal, consequences that could result if they dared to go public with what they saw and knew. Some of the men, Stringfield was advised, were subjected to deep hypnosis techniques that allowed for "cover stories" to be created. The reason: to help bury the real memories deep in their subconscious.

Of course, stories like this are as fascinating as they are frustrating: an unnamed source, no way to check out the story, and a tale of beyond-controversial proportions. Despite the undeniably sensational subject matter, Leonard Stringfield stood by the story, and by his high-ranking source, until his dying day in 1994. Lethal and deadly aliens? Maybe.…

For what is certainly a picturesque area on the map, the New Mexican town of Dulce—located in northern Rio Arriba County—is steeped in mystery. It's also home to around several thousand people and has a square mileage of barely thirteen. Its origins date back to the nineteenth century. It's not what goes on at Dulce that concerns us here, though. Rather, it's what is said to be going on far below the town—in myriad tunnels, caverns, caves, and hollowed-out chambers that are all said to be where untold

numbers of dangerous and hostile aliens live. Even worse, the U.S. government has had the fear of God (or of the aliens) put in them to such an extent that they dare not descend into that deadly, dark realm far below Dulce's huge Archuleta Mesa.

Today, tales of underground bases—in which nefarious experimentation is widespread—are all over the Internet. Just type "Underground Base + UFOs" into a search engine, and you'll find an endless array of tales of the controversial kind; they are overflowing with paranoia and tales of menace. Such tales were far less told in the 1970s, which is when the Dulce stories began to surface, specifically in the latter part of the decade. What makes the Dulce story so notable is that the initial rumors about the vast, alien facility miles below ground level came not from wide-eyed conspiracy theorists but from a number of people who worked deeply in the clandestine worlds of counterintelligence and disinformation. The latter is described as "false information deliberately and often covertly spread (as by the planting of rumors) in order to influence public opinion or obscure the truth," while counterintelligence is defined as "organized activity of an intelligence service designed to block an enemy's sources of information, to deceive the enemy, to prevent sabotage, and to gather political and military information."

In other words, we're talking about spies, secret agents, lies that might be truths, and truths that might be lies.

As for the Dulce story, it suggests that when a violent, deadly altercation occurred in the Dulce base at some point in 1979, the U.S. military—along with numerous scientists and engineers—was forced to flee for their lives. What had begun as a fairly amicable arrangement between the aliens of the black-eyed Grey type and the government team was now over. Irreversibly so. The Dulce base was now in the hands of a band of extraterrestrials who were

done with the human race. This, you won't fail to note, is very similar to the story told to Bob Lazar in the latter part of 1988, but in the scenario given to him, it was at S-4 rather than at Dulce where the deadly confrontation occurred. Unless both stories are true (which is unlikely because they are almost identical in nature), then a high likelihood exists that somewhere, deceit was at work.

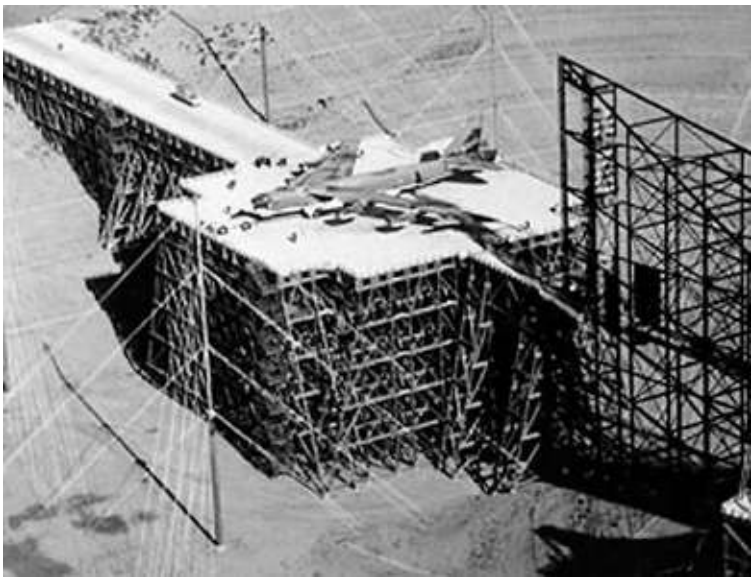
What had begun as a fairly amicable arrangement between the aliens of the blackeyed Grey type and the government team was now over.

Back in the 1970s, Paul Bennewitz—who died in 2003 in Albuquerque, New Mexico—had his own company that stood adjacent to Kirtland Air Force Base. Its name was Thunder Scientific. All was good, as Bennewitz had a number of good contracts with the military. Living and working so close to the base made things comfortable and handy for Bennewitz. It was the perfect relationship. Until, that is, it wasn't. In shockingly quick time, Bennewitz's life began to fragment in chaotic fashion—but how and why did such a thing happen?

It's important to note that by the late 1970s, Bennewitz had been interested in UFOs not just for years but for decades. He had a large library of books on the subject and subscribed to a number of newsletters and magazines. On occasion, Bennewitz had seen—late at night and in the early hours of the morning—strange, unidentified objects flying over Kirtland Air Force Base and the nearby Manzano Mountains. They could have been early dronelike craft being tested secretly, but for Bennewitz, they were alien craft.

Bennewitz's head spun. He came to believe that aliens were in

a league with the U.S. Air Force and that much of the secret program was run out of Kirtland. He shared his views with the staff at Kirtland, the CIA, the NSA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Pentagon, his senator, his congressman, and just about anyone and everyone in a position of power and influence. It was all but inevitable that by firing off lengthy letters about a secret alien–human operation at Kirtland, someone would take notice. That's exactly what they did. While one school of thought suggests that Bennewitz was indeed tracking the movements of UFOs in the skies over Kirtland, another suggests that Bennewitz had actually stumbled on test flights of new and radical aircraft of the aforementioned drone kind. In the latter scenario, the government (as a collective term for all of those agencies and individuals that Bennewitz approached) decided to first politely, but quietly, request that Bennewitz bring his research to a halt. This was like a red rag to a bull. Bennewitz would hear none of it. He was primed and ready to go after the U.S. government and to confirm what he saw as the dark and sinister truth of Uncle Sam's liaisons with aliens. One man against the government? It was clear who was going to win, although Bennewitz couldn't envisage such a thing at all.



A B-52 is subjected to an Electromagnets Pulse (EMP) simulator in this 1982 photograph taken at Kirtland Air Force Base. Kirtland has been one of the U.S. military's choice spots for weapons and airplane experimentation.

In ingenious fashion—but from the perspective of Bennewitz, in terrible fashion—a plot was initiated to, in essence, give Bennewitz exactly what he wanted to hear. So, well-placed government agents, intelligence operatives, and experts in the fields of counterintelligence and disinformation all fed Bennewitz fictitious tales of dangerous E.T.s, of thousands of people abducted and mind-controlled in slavelike fashion by the aliens, of terrible experiments undertaken on people held below the Dulce base, and of a looming confrontation between the human race and the deadly creatures from another galaxy.

The fact that the data was all coming to him from verifiable insider sources impressed Bennewitz and led him to believe their every word—which is precisely what the government was gambling on. The government then tightened the noose even tighter around Bennewitz's neck: they fed him more and more horror stories of the alien variety, and, slowly and bit by bit, Bennewitz's paranoia grew. If anyone walked casually past the family home, they just had to be government agents. If the phone rang out but stopped ringing before he had a chance to get to it, then that was a sign of intimidation from them. He couldn't sleep, he became stressed to the point where he required medication, and eventually, he had a nervous collapse and was hospitalized. The result: he walked away from UFOs, secret projects, and cosmic conspiracies as a crushed man—which may well have been the intent of the government anyway.

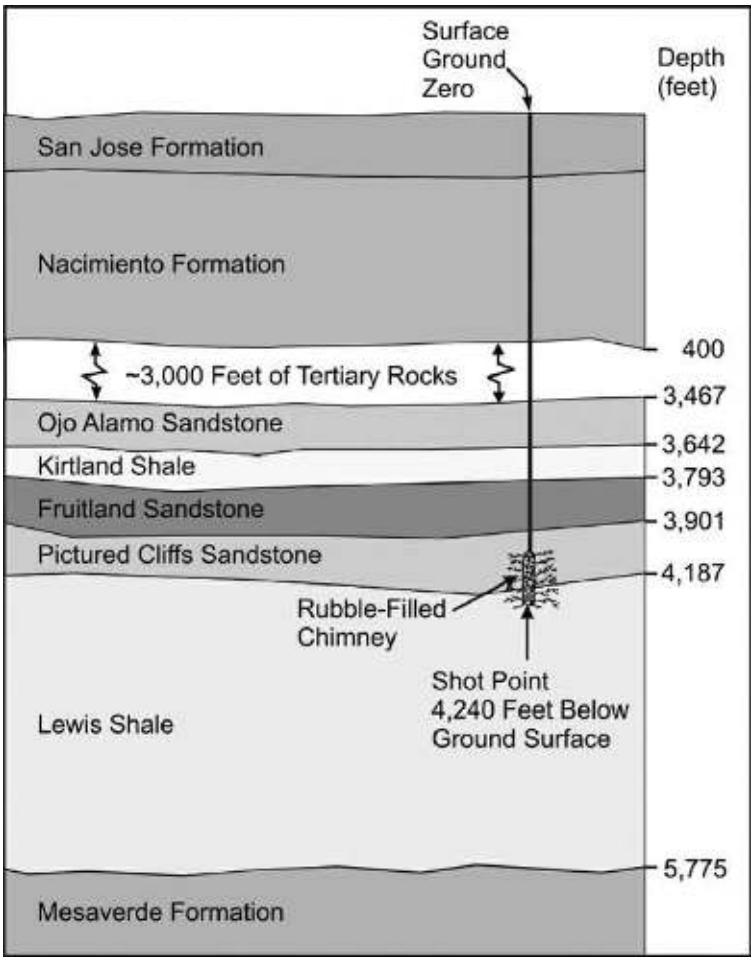
Although the saga of Paul Bennewitz began in the latter part of the 1970s and was pretty much over by the early to mid-1980s,

the story of the Dulce base developed legs. They are legs that still walk to this very day primarily because so many people within ufology find the tales of the underground base exciting—it really is that simple. Also, the government has—to a degree—continued to encourage the wilder and darker side of ufology as a means to further darken the waters of what it is really up to when it comes to new and advanced aircraft that many might perceive as UFOs. That said, though, some people absolutely stand by the claims that a huge, underground installation exists below Dulce. In many respects, the newer tales are even stranger and more horrifying than those that Bennewitz had shoved down his throat in the early eighties.

Admittedly, it's intriguing to note that Dulce is indeed saturated in weirdness—some of which occurred years before Bennewitz was on the scene.

More than a decade before Bennewitz came to believe that the awful rumors of Dulce were true, the U.S. government already had a stake in the area. A contingent from the Atomic Energy Commission rode into town and set up what was called Project Gasbuggy. It was a subproject of a much bigger project called Plowshare. The plan was to detonate—way below Dulce—a small nuclear device as a means to try to extract natural gas. The operation went ahead on December 10, 1967, and it worked all too well. The bomb was detonated at a depth of more than four thousand feet. Years later, however, researchers suggested that the natural gas scenario was a cover for something else. You may already see where this is all going. An enduring belief exists in ufology that the nuke was used by a panicked government to try to wipe out the alien base and the extraterrestrials said to live deep within it. Even to this day, it is illegal to dig in the area on the orders of the Atomic Energy Commission—the AEC having deep

ties to Area 51.



Project Gasbuggy was an experiment in which a small nuclear device was exploded 4,240 feet (1,292 meters) underground. The government said it was an experiment in natural gas extraction, while others say it was an attempt to destroy an underground alien base.

Moving on from 1975 to 1979, the town of Dulce was hit by numerous cattle mutilations: black helicopters soared across the skies of town by night—and sometimes, and incredibly, silently. Strange lights were seen flitting around Dulce's huge Archuleta Mesa. Cows were found with organs removed and blood drained from their corpses. The incisions looked as if they were the work of lasers. For those who might find all of this to be just too

incredible, it's worth noting that the FBI was heavily involved in the investigation of the mutilations at Dulce and has now placed its files on the mystery on their website, The Vault. It's a file that reads like science fiction and that runs to more than one hundred pages, and, as we have seen, strong evidence exists that the silent, black helicopters had their origins at Area 51.

In the post-Bennewitz era, other figures came forward with their very own tales of Dulce and its subterranean nightmare. Whether they were telling the truth or were fed lies and disinformation by government agents is something very much open to interpretation.

One such account came from Jason Bishop III, which is an alias for another alias, that of Tal Lavesque. No wonder the Dulce saga is so confusing. Lavesque/Bishop published what he claimed were the words of a former employee at the base, Thomas E. Castello. According to Castello: "Level 7 is worse, row after row of thousands of humans and human mixtures in cold storage. Here too are embryo storage vats of humanoids in various stages of development. I frequently encountered humans in cages, usually dazed or drugged, but sometimes they cried and begged for help. We were told they were hopelessly insane, and involved in high risk drug tests to cure insanity. We were told to never try to speak to them at all. At the beginning we believed that story. Finally in 1978 a small group of workers discovered the truth."

Then was the story of Alan B. de Walton, who also wrote about the claimed firefight that led to the hasty retreat of the U.S. military. In his controversial work, The Dulce Book, he stated that the human body is "surrounded by the etheric 'body,' surrounded by the astral 'body,' surrounded by the mental 'body.'"

On this same issue, an insider told de Walton that "we also actually have an extra 'body,' the emotional 'body,' that the aliens

don't have. This part of us constantly puts out a kind of energy they cannot generate or simulate. This emotional energy … is to them, like a potent, much sought-after drug. They can take it out of us and bottle it, so to speak.… Also during this 'harvesting,' Greys will look directly into our eyes, as if they are drinking something or basking in light."

This sounds not at all unlike the plotline in 1985's Lifeforce.

In 1991, Valdemar Valerian's book Matrix II hit the bookshelves. It referred to a female abductee who had seen in the Dulce base "a vat full of red liquid and body parts of humans and animals … she could see Greys bobbing up and down, almost swimming."

In 2015, Joshua Cutchin penned A Trojan Feast: The Food and Drink Offerings of Aliens, Faeries, and Sasquatch. Cutchin's words are chilling, to say the very least: "While abduction research does not overtly suggest that aliens are harvesting people for consumption, there may be a grain of truth to the report [contained in the pages of Valerian's Matrix II]. 'Nourishment is ingested by smearing a soupy mixture of biologicals on the epidermis. Food sources include Bovine cattle and human parts … distilled into a high protein broth.…'"

INDRID COLD

His name—Indrid Cold—sounds just like the kind one might find in the pages of a nineteenth-century gothic novel. That's not the case, though. Indrid Cold was a strange, sinister, alien entity that surfaced in West Virginia in the 1960s—in fact, at the very same time that the legendary Mothman first appeared in Point Pleasant, West Virginia. Susan Sheppard is an expert on the Indrid Cold controversy and provides the following.…

I may be one of the few people who remembers the West Virginia Mothman and related events before the "Mothman" even had a name. It was one chilly November day in 1966 that my sister came home from school to tell a peculiar story that happened the night before to Merle Partridge's family. I was small at the time, but I remember it this way: I sat at the kitchen table eating what

remained of Halloween candy from the bottom of a grocery store bag. There was plastic over the kitchen windows to keep the cold out. The hill outside was covered with brown and yellow grass that seemed to ripple. It always seemed like there were presences in our woods. My sister burst through the front door and then told a story about "Paula Partridge's Dad" seeing red eyes in the barn the night before and that their German Shepherd dog Bandit was now missing.

Strange red eyes staring out of the doorway of an old barn wasn't something you heard about often in central West Virginia, so my childish mind was awakened, and I held on to the story probably longer than anyone else in my family cared to. I can tell you that your ordinary West Virginia citizen didn't believe the tale at first. Once these strange manifestations that became Mothman began occurring, Indrid Cold and the Men in Black began to touch their lives in both big and small ways.

My family lived on Shannon's Knob in the small town of West Union, in Doddridge County, West Virginia, while the Partridges lived about 8 miles away from us in a country community called Center Point, basically across a ridge or two. My grandmother had been the post mistress of Center Point where she grew up in a log cabin and there was even a Banshee story associated with the community.

Although the dates given vary, it is usually accepted that the day of the Merle Partridge sighting, or the "red eyes in the barn," happened on November 15, 1966, the same night as the Scarberry encounter with the Mothman an hour and a half later near the TNT plant in Point Pleasant, which was about 100 miles away from Center Point.

Shortly before 10 o'clock in the evening, Merle Partridge was watching late night television with his son Roger, who was about

11 years old at the time. They first noticed their German shepherd dog barking outside, it seemed at a distance from the house, in an atypical kind of way that made them think something was terribly wrong. At that same time, the television set started "screaming" as the picture blanked out and the TV made a loud grinding sound, which Mr. Partridge later told author John Keel, "sounded like a generator winding up."

Partridge's account, which he told me (Susan Sheppard) in an interview in 2006, differed slightly than what John Keel eventually included in his The Mothman Prophecies. First, Keel must have misheard Merle Partridge's name and wrote it down as "Newell Partridge." Mr. Partridge was always open about the story and never asked to be given an alias. Merle Partridge told me, "I don't know why John Keel wrote my name down as Newell." It's possible the New York City author couldn't understand Partridge's West Virginia accent.

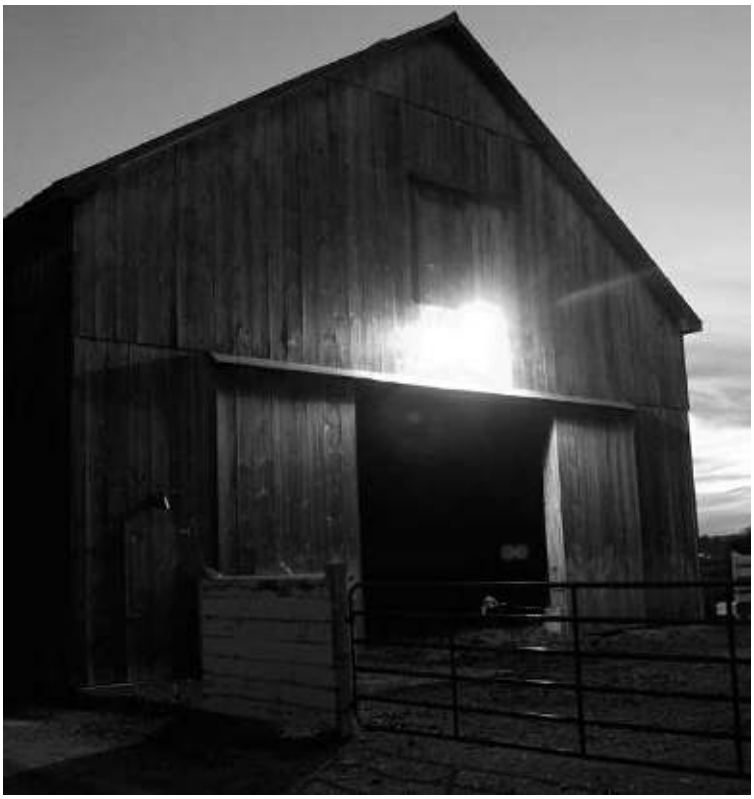
After listening to Bandit bark for a little while longer, Merle Partridge decided it might be a good idea to investigate the noises. It could have been a prowler on his property or even a black bear. Center Point was miles from any town. Mr. Partridge grabbed a flashlight, took Roger in tow and the two headed outdoors to find out what all of the ruckus was about. Partridge didn't see any red eyes from a distance, as some accounts claim. Instead, he saw Bandit standing at the entrance to the empty barn, which Partridge described as "a football field away." The dog barked frantically as he continued to stare into the barn.

As Merle Partridge and Roger got closer to the barn, Partridge said he felt the hair raise up on his arms. When he looked into the barn, he saw what he described as what looked to be, "Red, rotating electrical lights." Partridge explained to me, "Red lights, red eyes, whatever you want to call them."

On that chilly November night Partridge noticed what he thought was a dark shape lumbering up from the floor of the barn. The fur stood up on Bandit's back, the dog snarled angrily and he shot into the barn toward whatever the dark form was.

Merle Partridge and Roger ran back to the house. As they sat down in front of the television set, Bandit stopped barking and the picture came back on the screen of the TV. Calm was restored. Still, Mr. Partridge later mentioned that he slept with his rifle beside of him that night. The next morning, Bandit did not come to the back door for his breakfast as he usually did. Merle Partridge remembered that the last time he'd seen Bandit, the dog was running into the barn seemingly in pursuit of the red eyes, or "lights" and the dark form.

Merle and his children Mary, Roger, and Gary headed for the barn and what they found inside was chilling and mysterious. They discovered Bandit's paw prints in the dirt floor of the barn, but the paw prints only went in a circle and didn't lead away. It was as if that dog had been picked up and carried away by something much stronger and larger. Mary Partridge also commented there were other tracks, but they didn't belong to the dog. She said they looked like giant turkey tracks but ones like she'd never seen before.



Red eyes staring out of a barn at night and a missing dog were not exactly the norm in a peaceful farming community.

At this point, Merle Partridge didn't realize that the night before, less than an hour after his encounter with the "red eyes in the barn," Roger and Linda Scarberry, of Point Pleasant, along with Steve and Mary Mallette, would also meet up with these "red eyes" at the TNT plant on the outskirts of town, and then more times along Route 2, except now they were able to see a figure attached to the red eyes or "lights" in detail. It was a tall humanoid creature of over six feet tall, with crimson eyes that seemed to be set in its shoulders, and a wing span of almost 10 feet. (Later witnesses would describe the creature as varying shades of grey, brown, or tan and sometimes flesh-toned.)

In later interviews, Linda Scarberry, like Merle Partridge, described the eyes of the creature as looking like "red lights" and not really bicycle reflectors that Keel compares them to in his

book. In fact, at one point when the Scarberrys thought they had outdistanced the Mothman after he had been flying over their car, Linda looked into a field and thought she saw red lights on a billboard. When the billboard was caught in the beams of the Scarberrys' car, Linda claimed the Mothman was perched on the edge of the billboard. As they passed, the Mothman once again took flight and continued in pursuit of their car.

As they came upon the city limits of Point Pleasant, Linda Scarberry looked and saw the dead body of a large dog beside the road. As the young couple drove, the Mothman soared overhead but only a few feet above the car. The wings of the creature were so huge that as they flapped they hit the side doors of Roger's car. Once they arrived in town, they drove directly to the Point Pleasant Police Station and made their famous report. Sources say it was Roger Scarberry who made a sketch. When the police went out to check the car, they found large scratches on each side door.

When finally the frightened couple returned to their house, Linda Scarberry claimed the Mothman had followed them and peered into the windows the rest of the night.

When finally the frightened couple returned to their house, Linda Scarberry claimed the Mothman had followed them and peered into the windows the rest of the night. In one interview Linda remarked, "Even to this day, I will not look out my windows after dark."

Within a day or two, the Mothman story (the creature did not yet have a name and was referred to as a "bird" or "Birdman")

made its way through news syndicates, appearing in newspapers but mostly in the mid-Atlantic region. These caught the eye of Merle Partridge in Doddridge County because the account seemed eerily similar to what he had experienced on the same night, but what he really noticed was the mention of the dead dog beside the city limits sign of Point Pleasant. The Partridges' German shepherd dog Bandit did not return, nor would he ever. Merle called the News Syndicate who put him in touch with Mary Hyre where the Doddridge Countian gave his report. Mary Hyre wrote up Partridge's account and kept it. Later, John Keel would follow up on the story and include it in his book The Mothman Prophecies.

However, the strangeness that enveloped West Virginia and the Ohio Valley did not begin with the Scarberry encounter along Route 2 north of Point Pleasant. Another puzzling event had occurred in Parkersburg twelve days before. This happened on November 2, 1966, one mile south of the city limits of Parkersburg. It involved a sewing machine salesman whose life was about to be disrupted in such a way that he would never entirely recover.

His name was Woodrow Derenberger, but everyone called him Woody. It was shortly after 6:00 P.M. when Woody Derenberger was driving home from his job as a sewing machine salesman at JCPenney in Marietta, Ohio, to his farmhouse in Mineral Wells, West Virginia. The ride home was overcast and dreary. It was misting a light rain.

As Derenberger came up on the intersection of I-77 and Route 47, he thought that a tractor trailer truck was tailgating him without its lights on, which was unnerving, so he swerved to the side of

the road and, much to his surprise, the truck appeared to take flight and roll across his panel truck. To his astonishment, what Derenberger thought was a truck was a charcoal-colored UFO without any lights on. It touched down and then hovered about ten inches above the berm of the road. Much to Derenberger's surprise, a hatch opened, and a man stepped out looking like "any ordinary man you would see on the street—there was nothing unusual about his appearance."

Nothing unusual, except that the man was dressed in dark clothing and had a "beaming smile." As the man proceeded to walk toward Derenberger's panel truck, the "craft" jetted up to about forty feet in the air, where it floated above the highway. What happened next was unsettling because as the darkly dressed man came up toward the vehicle, Woody Derenberger heard the words, "Do not be afraid, I mean you no harm, I only want to ask you a few questions." Derenberger did become afraid because as the man spoke to Woodrow, his lips did not move. The man then moved to the opposite side of the truck and told Derenberger to roll down his window so they could talk better, which he did. What formed in Derenberger's mind next were the words, "Now you can speak, or you can think … it makes no difference, I can understand you either way.…" This is what the dark man said.

Later, when Derenberger was questioned on local live television, he was scrutinized over what seemed to be a contradiction because if the dark man communicated through a type of mental telepathy, why would Derenberger need to roll down his window to talk? Wouldn't it be easier just to talk mentally?

Woodrow Derenberger explained that it was because Indrid Cold wanted to look directly at him as they spoke, and he felt that, really, Cold wasn't so interested in what was said but more

interested in keeping up a communication with him. To Derenberger, that seemed to be the entire point of it all. Derenberger also noted that when Cold stared into his eyes, it was as if he knew everything about Woodrow Derenberger, and also, if he could only let go of his fear and do the same, he felt he would also know and understand all about Cold. In any event, Cold spoke through the passenger-side window the entire time.

The physical description of Cold was commonplace. Derenberger described him as about thirty-five years of age, having a trim build, about six feet tall and 185 pounds, with dark eyes and dark hair slicked straight back. Cold wore a long, dark coat, and Derenberger was able to glimpse the fabric of the "uniform" that glistened beneath his coat. He also described Cold as having a "tanned complexion." Throughout the conversation, Cold kept a frozen smile and curiously hid his hands beneath his armpits most of the time.

Derenberger described Indrid Cold as a man in his mid-thirties with black, slicked-back hair.

Cold did, however, point at the city lights above the distant hills of Parkersburg and asked Mr. Derenberger, "What do you call that over there?" Derenberger said, "Why, that's Parkersburg and we call that a city." Cold responded, "Where I come from we call it a gathering." Cold later added the curious statement that "I come from a place less powerful than yours." As the men talked, cars passed under the craft, which drifted above the road. The occupants were seemingly unaware of the spaceship being there.

After all, no lights could be seen. Cold then asked about Parkersburg: "Do people live there or do they work there?"

Woody Derenberger answered, "Why, yes, people live and work there." Cold interjected, "Do you work, Mr. Derenberger?" (Woodrow told Cold his name as the conversation began.)

Derenberger answered, "I am a salesman. That's what I do. Do you have a job?" Cold answered, "Yes. I am a searcher."

After that, the conversation became mundane. Cold seemed to notice that Woodrow Derenberger was scared and commented on it. Mr. Derenberger claimed that Cold asked him, "Why are you so frightened? Do not be afraid. We mean you no harm. You will see that we eat and bleed the same as you do," then added an emotive note: "We only wish you happiness," which Cold said to the frightened man more than once.

While Mr. Derenberger was being interviewed on WTAP-TV television live the next day, he attributed this puzzling statement to Indrid Cold: "At the proper time, the authorities will be notified about our meeting and this will be confirmed." The entire conversation took between five and ten minutes, then Cold looked inside Woody's car with his ever-present smile and said, "Mr. Derenberger, I thank you for talking to me. We will see you again."

He ended the conversation with "we will see you again," and as soon as he did, the spaceship immediately came back down and floated about ten inches off the road. A hatch opened, and a human arm extended, pulling Cold up into the craft. The ship then jetted up into the air about seventy-five feet, made a fluttering noise, and then shot away at a very high rate of speed. For a few moments, Woodrow Derenberger sat stunned. Finally, he started up his car and drove to his farmhouse in Mineral Wells. By now, it was shortly before seven o'clock.

Mrs. Derenberger met her husband at the door. She later said that Woodrow "could not have been any whiter if he had been lying in a coffin." The stories vary, but from Mr. Derenberger's account, his wife was the one who called the West Virginia state police, or, at least, she was the one who dialed the phone. Woodrow Derenberger gave them a brief report of what he claimed to have happened. It is interesting to note that in the initial report, Derenberger called the alien "Cold" but did not mention "Indrid" until later.

The next day, Derenberger attempted to go back to work but was sidetracked when he agreed to a live television interview about his experience on the previous night with a UFO with WTAP-TV, the NBC affiliate in Parkersburg, which was housed in a small building not much bigger than a garage. The interview took place shortly before noon, where Derenberger was grilled by veteran reporter Glenn Wilson and city police chief Ed Plum as well as other local law enforcement, including the head of the Wood County Airport. Representatives from Wright-Patterson were en route to interview Derenberger, but whether that came about is not known.

They would arrive at his house, ask him simple questions (some had to do with his UFO experience), and then, the Men in Black acted in a threatening manner.

The interview went on for about two and a half hours. The live part of the broadcast was under an hour long and then the television cameras were turned off and the interview continued off

the air for another hour or so. During that time, Derenberger drew a picture of the spacecraft, which he described in his thick, West Virginia accent as charcoal gray with no lights and looking like an "old-fashioned chimney lamp." (You may want to Google this because I am not clear what he intended to say. I found some interesting images when I did.… Parts of the lamps may look like UFOs.)

Probably, one of the most curious statements Woodrow Derenberger made about his meeting with Cold was, "And then Cold said to me, we will see you again …," and then his voice trails off. Police chief Ed Plum asked, "Do you really believe you will see him again?" Derenberger then answered, "I think so.… I believe I will.… I don't know … because that's what I am afraid of."

After that interview, Derenberger's life transformed drastically and not for the better. He changed jobs, developed marital problems, clung to his church for a while, and then came the strange visits from men dressed in black clothing, whom Derenberger suspected to be some kind of hidden government group of spies or maybe even the Mafia. He wasn't sure; they just spooked him. They would arrive at his house, ask him simple questions (some had to do with his UFO experience), and then, the Men in Black acted in a threatening manner.

However, nothing was as incredible as the return of Indrid Cold. At least, this is what Woodrow Derenberger claimed. He said that Cold visited him many times at his farmhouse in Mineral Wells. At one point, Derenberger came up missing for almost six months and said he was "with the aliens." The local population finally became skeptical. The sewing machine salesman's tale grew more and more far-fetched. Derenberger even claimed to have been impregnated by the aliens. In 1967, Woodrow Derenberger

stated to have visited Indrid Cold's home planet of Lanulos, where its residents walked around wearing no clothing. He said that the aliens lived in a galaxy called Ganymede, where everything was peaceful and war did not exist. People began to snicker.

Still, odd, flashing lights occurred in the sky almost nightly, and the curiosity seekers stalked not only Derenberger's modest farmhouse but an area called Bogle Ridge not far from Mineral Wells, where the aliens were claimed to have landed. The ridicule became too much. Derenberger, with his family, moved away from the area and stayed away for decades. He returned to Wood County in the 1980s and died in 1990. Woodrow Derenberger was finally laid to rest at Mount Zion Cemetery in Mineral Wells, West Virginia.

John Keel was not a believer in Woodrow Derenberger's UFO story, so it's mysterious why he would make it such a big part of The Mothman Prophecies book. In The Mothman Prophecies movie, the character Gordon Smallwood is based upon Woodrow Derenberger, but the Wood County man most often appeared in a suit and not overalls. A few elements to his story make it believable that, initially, something of an extraordinary nature happened to him. First of all, his account predates the Mothman sightings by twelve days. Derenberger would have had to have been a prophet to know what was about to happen next, making his story even more extraordinary. His family explains that they believe something of an otherworldly nature initially happened, but he added to the tale to sell books when he self-published a book called Visitors from Lanulos in 1971.

A few other accounts add some believability to key aspects of Woodrow Derenberger's fantastic story. An elderly man driving south of Parkersburg on I-77 reported seeing a man by the side of the road (one that met Indrid Cold's description), who tried to flag

him down. The gentleman slowed down, but when the darkly clad man headed for the passenger door of his car, the senior citizen became frightened and drove away. “There was something off about that character,” the old man later told Glenn Wilson of WTAP-TV.

I also ran into something curious when I was researching stories for my ghost tour back in 1996. I found the news article about Woodrow Derenberger’s UFO tale in the Parkersburg News & Sentinel dated November 4, 1966, where the story was on a front section of the newspaper. The account read “Local Man Stopped by UFO.” In the same section of the newspaper, right beside it, was another smaller article about a complete power outage that happened in South Parkersburg at precisely the same time Derenberger claimed he was interrupted by Indrid Cold’s spaceship. South Parkersburg borders the community of Mineral Wells. An energy disturbance in Mineral Wells would likely also affect South Parkersburg.

INSECT ALIENS

Is it possible that the Southwest region of the United States is home to giant-sized, extraterrestrial insects that feed upon us? Such a thing sounds not just unlikely and incredible but not too far from the kind of scenario presented in the classic 1954 sci-fi movie Them! It's a movie in which massive, radioactive ants terrorize and slaughter the people of a small New Mexico town and threaten to do likewise to not just the rest of the country but to the entire planet, too, which brings us to an important question: Might truth be stranger than fiction? Yes, just possibly. Danielle B. lived for years in the New Mexican town of Aztec, which, just like the far-more-famous New Mexican town of Roswell, has a crashed UFO legend attached to it. It's a legend dating back to March 1948, when a near-intact flying saucer and its crew of diminutive dead pilots were reportedly found, but according to Danielle, she encountered something far stranger at Aztec than deceased, extraterrestrial

dwarfs and a wrecked flying saucer.

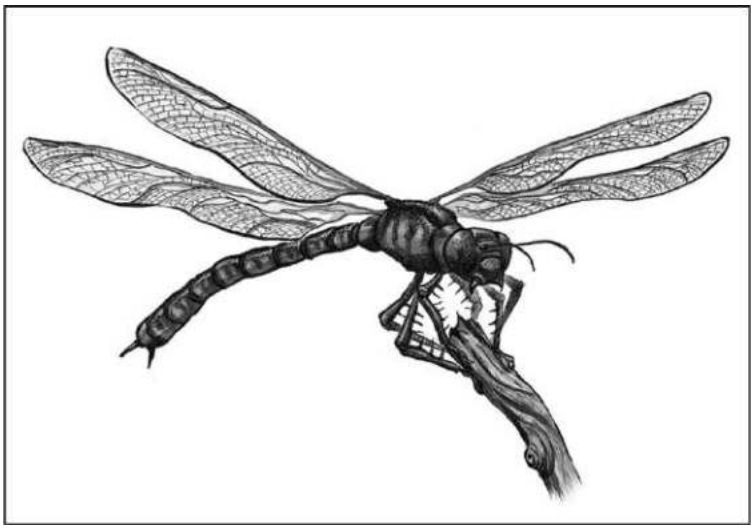
It was on one particular day in May 2004 that Danielle decided to spend a few hours hanging out in Aztec's Hart Canyon, which, curiously enough, is exactly where the alleged UFO is said to have fallen to Earth back in the 1940s. It was also where Danielle had an encounter with something far worse than dwarfish, black-eyed aliens. On what was a warm and sunny day, Danielle found a place to sit, where she could read a book and have her snacks and drinks at hand. It was a perfect way to spend a day off work—or it was for a while, at least.

All was normal for a couple of hours until Danielle noticed a small, black helicopter approaching her in the distance. Far more correctly, she assumed that it was a helicopter. Certainly, at a distance, that's what it appeared to be, but it was no normal helicopter: the "thud-thud" sound that one associates with the fast-moving blades of a helicopter was not heard, and on top of that, it appeared to be carrying below it a small calf, held tightly in place by thick ropes! Most definitely not the kind of thing you see every day. When the helicopter got close to Hart Canyon, however, Danielle could see that the helicopter was actually nothing of the sort. It was a large, obscene-looking insect of around four meters in length. The presumed rotor blades of the helicopter were the fast-beating wings of the monster-creature. As for those ropes, they were nothing less than powerful-looking black limbs.

Danielle could only stare—in a mixture of awe, fascination, fear, and horror—as the huge creature flew overhead, dropped the poor calf on a nearby peak, and then swooped to the ground with frightening speed, pounced on the animal, and viciously tore into it. In less than half an hour, the giant insect was done with its feasting and took to the skies. Danielle had been too shocked to flee the area at the time, the result of which was that the terrible

event was forever embedded in her memory, even though she clearly wished that this was not the case. Suspecting—probably correctly—that if she told local law-enforcement officials of what she saw, she would likely be booked for wasting police time, Danielle finally, shakily, made her way home. She stayed silent on the matter until she confided in me roughly three years later.

Even I have to admit that Danielle's story stretches credibility to the max, despite the fact that she came across as nothing less than absolutely credible, down-to-earth, and normal. While many might be inclined to dismiss such a bizarre account, I don't. Not because, in X-Files-style, "I want to believe," but because of something very different. It may come as a surprise to a lot of people to learn that, in the distant past, huge insects—not unlike the one described by Danielle—really did exist.



During the Jurassic, there was a huge, dragonfly-like insect called Meganeura monyi that could have a wingspan up to 28 inches (70 centimeters) across. Could such insects have survived into the present day?

For example, a dragonfly called Meganeura monyi existed in the Jurassic era in what today is the United States. This was no

regular dragonfly, however. It had a wingspan in excess of two feet. As another example, in 2001, Ohio State University geologists discovered the fossilized remains of a centipede in an old mine. It was a centipede five feet long. The ancient remains of a sea scorpion were unearthed from a German quarry in 2007; an arthropod, the sea scorpion is of the same group as insects and spiders. Something was very notable about this particular sea scorpion, however: it was slightly more than eight feet in length.

Of course, none of these oversized things were alive at the time of their discovery. Indeed, they lived, walked, and flew millions of years ago, but is it feasible that in certain parts of the United States—and amid a great deal of stealth and, perhaps, underground caves and caverns—certain similar things exist today? Most people might say, "No," but try asking Danielle, and you will get a very different response. To this very day, she has no doubt that these things are all too real. At the time of this writing, she is working on a book that ties in the predations of these hideous things with the so-called "cattle-mutilation" phenomenon, which has plagued and puzzled ranchers, police officers, and even the FBI for decades, particularly so in the Southwest. In Danielle's scenario, the cattle mutilators are monsters. The mutilators are giant creatures from the stars that are feeding on the nation's cattle herds late at night.

Perhaps, one day, Danielle's story will finally be vindicated. If such a thing does happen, let's hope it's not because the huge, alien insects have decided to turn their predatory attentions toward the human race. The possibility that Them! may one day become reality—rather than the stuff of sci-fi—is as chilling as it is disturbing. Before you write off such a fantastic scenario, it's worth noting that the cattle-mutilation phenomenon has concerned and worried the U.S. government for more than fifty years, as we

shall now see.

Since at least 1967, reports have surfaced throughout the United States of animals—chiefly cattle—slaughtered in a bizarre fashion. Organs are taken, and significant amounts of blood are found to be missing. In some cases, the limbs of the cattle are broken, suggesting that they have been dropped to the ground from a significant height. Evidence of extreme heat, to slice into the skin of the animals, has been found at mutilation sites. Eyes are removed, tongues are sliced off, and, typically, the sexual organs are gone.

While the answers to the puzzle remain frustratingly outside of the public arena, theories abound. They include extraterrestrials engaged in nightmarish experimentation of the genetic kind; military programs involving the testing of new biowarfare weapons; occult-based groups that sacrifice the cattle in ritualistic fashion; and government agencies secretly monitoring the food chain, fearful that something worse than "mad cow disease" may have infected the U.S. cattle herd—and, possibly, as a result, the human population, too.

Cattle mutilations are a favorite topic of UFO researchers and conspiracy theorists. From the mid-1970s to the dawning of the 1980s, however, the phenomenon was of deep interest to another body: the FBI.

From January to March 1973, the state of Iowa was hit hard by cattle mutilations. Not only that, many of the ranchers who lost animals reported seeing strange lights and black-colored helicopters in the direct vicinities of the attacks. The fact that the

FBI took keen notice of all this is demonstrated by the fact that, as the Freedom of Information Act has shown, it collected and filed numerous media reports on the cattle mutilations in Iowa. The next piece of data dates from early September 1974. That's when the FBI's director, Clarence M. Kelley, was contacted by Senator Carl T. Curtis, who wished to inform the Bureau of a wave of baffling attacks on livestock in Nebraska—the state in which Curtis resided and represented.

The fact that the FBI took keen notice of all this is demonstrated by the fact that … it collected and filed numerous media reports on the cattle mutilations in Iowa.

At the time, the FBI declined to get involved, as Director Kelley informed the senator: "It appears that no Federal Law within the investigative jurisdiction of the FBI has been violated, inasmuch as there is no indication of interstate transportation of the maimed animals."

One year later, in August 1975, Senator Floyd K. Haskell of Colorado made his voice known to the FBI on the growing cattle-mutilation controversy: "For several months my office has been receiving reports of cattle mutilations throughout Colorado and other western states. At least 130 cases in Colorado alone have been reported to local officials and the Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI); the CBI has verified that the incidents have occurred for the last two years in nine states. The ranchers and rural residents of Colorado are concerned and frightened by these incidents. The bizarre mutilations are frightening in themselves: in virtually all the cases, the left ear, rectum and sex organ of each

animal has been cut away and the blood drained from the carcass, but with no traces of blood left on the ground and no footprints."

The senator had much more to say, too:

"In Colorado's Morgan County area there has [sic] also been reports that a helicopter was used by those who mutilated the carcasses of the cattle, and several persons have reported being chased by a similar helicopter. Because I am gravely concerned by this situation, I am asking that the Federal Bureau of Investigation enter the case.

"Although the CBI has been investigating the incidents, and local officials also have been involved, the lack of a central unified direction has frustrated the investigation. It seems to have progressed little, except for the recognition at long last that the incidents must be taken seriously. Now it appears that ranchers are arming themselves to protect their livestock, as well as their families and themselves, because they are frustrated by the unsuccessful investigation. Clearly something must be done before someone gets hurt."

Again, the FBI—some ranchers and media people thought, rather suspiciously—declined to get involved in the investigation of the phenomenon. It was a stance the FBI rigidly stuck to (despite collecting numerous, nationwide newspaper and magazine articles on the subject) until 1978. That was when the FBI learned of an astonishing number of horse and cattle mutilations in Rio Arriba County, New Mexico—mutilations that actually dated back to 1976. They had all been scrupulously investigated and documented by Police Officer Gabe Valdez of Espanola.

It was when the FBI was contacted by New Mexico's Senator Harrison "Jack" Schmitt (also the twelfth person to set foot on the Moon, which he did in December 1972), who implored the FBI to

get involved, that action was finally taken. In March 1979, Assistant Attorney General Philip B. Heymann prepared a summary on the New Mexico cases for the FBI, and—for good measure—photocopied all of Officer Valdez's files to the Bureau's director. Things were about to be taken to a new level.

As Valdez's voluminous records showed, from summer 1975 to early fall 1978, no fewer than twenty-eight cattle-mutilation incidents occurred in Rio Arriba County. One of the most bizarre events occurred in June 1976, as Valdez's files demonstrate:

"Investigations around the area revealed that a suspected aircraft of some type had landed twice, leaving three pod marks positioned in a triangular shape. The diameter of each pod was 14 inches. Emanating from the two landings were smaller triangular shaped tripods 28 inches and 4 inches in diameter. Investigation at the scene showed that these small tripods had followed the cow for approximately 600 feet. Tracks of the cow showed where she had struggled and fallen. The small tripod tracks were all around the cow. Other evidence showed that grass around the tripods, as they followed the cow, had been scorched. Also a yellow oily substance was located in two places under the small tripods. This substance was submitted to the State Police Lab. The Lab was unable to detect the content of the substance.

"A sample of the substance was submitted to a private lab and they were unable to analyze the substance when it disappeared or disintegrated. Skin samples were analyzed by the State Police Lab and the Medical Examiner's Office. It was reported that the skin had been cut with a sharp instrument."

Pictured here in 2009, former astronaut Harrison Schmitt was a New Mexico senator when the cattle mutilations were plaguing his state. He contacted the FBI to investigate.

Seventy-two hours later, Valdez liaised with Dr. Howard Burgess of the New Mexico-based Sandia Laboratories with a view to having the area checked for radiation. It was a wise move. The radiation level was double that which could normally be expected. Valdez's conclusions on this issue: "It is the opinion of this writer that radiation findings are deliberately being left at the scene to confuse investigators."

Pinkish blood from … was visible, and after two days the blood still had not coagulated.

The case was not over, however. Whatever, or whoever, was responsible for the mutilation made a return visit. Once again, we need to take a look at the official files on the affair. In Valdez's own official words: "There was also evidence that the tripod marks had returned and removed the left ear. Tripod marks were found over Mr. Gomez's tire tracks of his original visit. The left ear was intact when Mr. Gomez first found the cow. The cow had a 3-month-old calf which has not been located since the incident. This appears strange since a small calf normally stays around the mother even though the cow is dead."

On the matter of whether or not the mutilations were the work of cults or natural predators, Valdez said: "Both have been ruled out due to expertise and preciseness and the cost involved to conduct such a sophisticated and secretive operation. It should also be noted that during the spring of 1974 when a tremendous amount of cattle were lost due to heavy snowfalls, the carcasses had been eaten by predators. These carcasses did not resemble the carcasses of the mutilated cows. Investigation has narrowed down to these theories which involve (1) Experimental use of Vitamin B12 and (2) The testing of the lymph node system. During this investigation an intensive study has been made of (3) What is involved in germ warfare testing, and the possible correlation of these 3 factors (germ warfare testing, use of Vitamin B12, testing of the lymph node system)."

A further, very strange, report can be found in Valdez's files from 1978:

“This four-year-old cross Hereford and Black Angus native cow was found lying on left side with rectum, sex organs, tongue, and ears removed. Pinkish blood from [illegible] was visible, and after two days the blood still had not coagulated. Left front and left rear leg were pulled out of their sockets apparently from the weight of the cow which indicates that it was lifted and dropped back to the ground. The ground around and under the cow was soft and showed indentations where the cow had been dropped. 600 yards away from the cow were the 4-inch circular indentations similar to the ones found at the Manuel Gomez ranch on 4-24-78.

“This cow had been dead approximately [illegible] hours and was too decomposed to extract samples. This is the first in a series of mutilations in which the cows’ legs are broken. Previously the animals had been lifted from the brisket with a strap. These mutilated animals all dehydrate rapidly (in one or two days).”

As summer 1978 progressed, so did the number of reports where elevated radiation readings were found, as Valdez noted in his records: “It is believed that this type of radiation is not harmful to humans, although approximately 7 people who visited the mutilation site complained of nausea and headaches. However, this writer has had no such symptoms after checking approximately 11 mutilations in the past 4 months. Identical mutilations have been taking place all over the Southwest. It is strange that no eyewitnesses have come forward or that no accidents [have] occurred. One has to admit that whoever is responsible for the mutilations is very well organized with boundless financing and secrecy. Writer is presently getting equipment through the efforts of Mr. Howard Burgess, Albuquerque, N.M. to detect substances on the cattle which might mark them and be picked up by infra-red rays but not visible to the naked eye.”

A lengthy document, prepared by Forrest S. Putman, the

FBI's Special Agent in Charge in Albuquerque, New Mexico, was soon thereafter sent to the FBI's headquarters in Washington, D.C. It read: "Information furnished to this office by Officer Valdez indicates that the animals are being shot with some type of paralyzing drug and the blood is being drawn from the animal after an injection of an anti-coagulant. It appears that in some instances the cattle's legs have been broken and helicopters without any identifying numbers have reportedly been seen in the vicinity of these mutilations.

"Officer Valdez theorizes that clamps are being placed on the cow's legs and they are being lifted by helicopter to some remote area where the mutilations are taking place and then the animal is returned to its original pasture. The mutilations primarily consist of removal of the tongue, the lymph gland, lower lip and the sexual organs of the animal.

"Much mystery has surrounded these mutilations, but according to witnesses they give the appearance of being very professionally done with a surgical instrument, and according to Valdez, as the years progress, each surgical procedure appears to be more professional. Officer Valdez has advised that in no instance, to his knowledge, are these carcasses ever attacked by predator or scavenger animals, although there are tracks which would indicate that coyotes have been circling the carcass from a distance. Special Agent Putman then informed the Director of the outcome of Valdez's run-ins with officials.

"He also advised that he has requested Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory to conduct investigation for him but until just recently has always been advised that the mutilations were done by predatory animals. Officer Valdez stated that just recently he has been told by two assistants at Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory that they were able to determine the type of tranquilizer and blood

anti-coagulant that have been utilized."

Putman then demonstrated to headquarters the astonishing scale of the mutilation puzzle: "Officer Valdez stated that Colorado probably has the most mutilations occurring within their State and that over the past four years approximately 30 have occurred in New Mexico. He stated that of these 330, 15 have occurred on Indian Reservations but he did know that many mutilations have gone unreported which have occurred on the Indian reservations because the Indians, particularly in the Pueblos, are extremely superstitious and will not even allow officers in to investigate in some instances. Officer Valdez stated since the outset of these mutilations there have been an estimated 8,000 animals mutilated which would place the loss at approximately $1,000,000."

Putman additionally advised the director: "It is obvious if mutilations are to be solved there is a need for a coordinated effort so that all material available can be gathered and analyzed and further efforts synchronized. Whether the FBI should assume this role is a matter to be decided. If we are merely to investigate and direct our efforts toward the 15 mutilated cattle on the Indian reservation we, I believe, will be in the same position as the other law enforcement agencies at this time and would be seeking to achieve an almost impossible task.

Traces of radiation and evidence of what looks like landing gear have left some people wondering whether UFOs are behind the mysterious cattle mutilations.

"It is my belief that if we are to participate in any manner that we should do so fully, although this office and the USA's office are at a loss to determine what statute our investigative jurisdiction would be in this matter. If we are to act solely as a coordinator or in any other official capacity the sooner we can place this information in the computer bank, the better off we would be and in this regard it would be my recommendation that an expert in the computer field at the Bureau travel to Albuquerque in the very near future so that we can determine what type of information will be needed so that when the invitation for the April conference is submitted from Senator Schmitt's Office that the surrounding States will be aware of the information that is needed to place in the computer.

"It should be noted that Senator Schmitt's Office is coordinating the April conference and will submit the appropriate

invitations and with the cooperation of the USA, Mr. Thompson will chair this conference. The FBI will act only as a participant."

Putman went on to describe the theories that had been advanced to try to explain the phenomenon: "Since this has not been investigated by the FBI in any manner we have no theories whatsoever as to why or what is responsible for these cattle mutilations. Officer Gabe Valdez is very adamant in his opinion that these mutilations are the work of the U.S. Government and that it is some clandestine operation either by the CIA or the Department of Energy and in all probability is connected with some type of research into biological warfare. His main reason for these beliefs is that he feels that he was given the 'run around' by Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory and they are attempting to cover up this situation. There are also theories that these are cults (religious) of some type of Indian rituals resulting in these mutilations and the wildest theory advanced is that they have some connection with unidentified flying objects."

In the closing section of his report, Putman said:

"If we are to assume an investigative posture into this area, the matter of manpower, of course, becomes a consideration and I am unable to determine at this time the amount of manpower that would be needed to give this our full attention so that a rapid conclusion could be reached. The Bureau is requested to furnish its comments and guidance on this whole situation including, if desired, the Legal Counsel's assessment of jurisdictional question. An early response would be needed, however, so that we might properly, if requested to do so, obtain the data bank information. If it appears that we are going to become involved in this matter, it is obvious that there would be a large amount of correspondence necessary and Albuquerque would suggest a code name be established of BOVMUT."

As a result of the growing concern surrounding the cattle mutilations, a conference on the subject was held on April 20, 1979, at the Albuquerque Public Library. A heavy concentration of FBI agents was at the conference, something that resulted in the following official document being prepared, which summarized the various theories, cases, and ideas advanced at the conference:

"Forrest S. Putman, Special Agent in Charge (SAC), Albuquerque Office of the FBI, explained to the conference that the Justice Department had given the FBI authority to investigate those cattle mutilations which have occurred or might occur on Indian lands. He further explained that the Albuquerque FBI would look at such mutilations in connection with mutilations occurring off Indian lands for the purpose of comparison and control, especially where the same methods of operation are noted. SAC Putman said that in order for this matter to be resolved, the facts surrounding such mutilations should be gathered and computerized.

As a result of the growing concern surrounding the cattle mutilations, a conference on the subject was held on April 20, 1979, at the Albuquerque Public Library.

"District Attorney Eloy Martinez, Santa Fe, New Mexico, told the conference that his judicial district had made application for a $50,000 Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) Grant for the purpose of investigating the cattle mutilations. He explained that there is hope that with the funds from this grant, an investigative unit can be established for the sole purpose of

resolving the mutilation problem. He said it is his view that such an investigative unit could serve as a headquarters for all law enforcement officials investigating the mutilations and, in particular, would serve as a repository for information developed in order that this information could be coordinated properly. He said such a unit would not only coordinate this information, but also handle submissions to a qualified lab for both evidence and photographs. Mr. Martinez said a hearing will be held on April 24, 1979, for the purpose of determining whether this grant will be approved.

"Gabe Valdez, New Mexico State Police, Dulce, New Mexico, reported he has investigated the death of 90 cattle during the past three years, as well as six horses. Officer Valdez said he is convinced that the mutilations of the animals have not been the work of predators because of the precise manner of the cuts. Officer Valdez said he had investigated mutilations of several animals which had occurred on the ranch of Manuel Gomez of Dulce, New Mexico.

"Manuel Gomez addressed the conference and explained he had lost six animals to unexplained deaths which were found in a mutilated condition within the last two years. Further, Gomez said that he and his family are experiencing fear and mental anguish because of the mutilations."

"David Perkins, Director of the Department of Research at Libre School in Farasita, Colorado, exhibited a map of the United States which contained hundreds of colored pins identifying mutilation sites. He commented that he had been making a systematic collection of data since 1975, and has never met a greater challenge. He said, 'The only thing that makes sense about the mutilations is that they make no sense at all.'"

"Tom Adams of Paris, Texas, who has been independently

examining mutilations for six years, said his investigation has shown that helicopters are almost always observed in the area of the mutilations. He said that the helicopters do not have identifying markings and they fly at abnormal, unsafe, or illegal altitudes.

"Dr. Peter Van Arsdale, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Denver, suggested that those investigating the cattle mutilations take a systematic approach and look at all types of evidence in discounting any of the theories such as responsibility by extraterrestrial visitors or satanic cults.

"Richard Sigismund, Social Scientist, Boulder, Colorado, presented an argument which advanced the theory that the cattle mutilations are possibly related to activity of UFOs. Numerous other persons made similar type presentations expounding on their theories regarding the possibility that the mutilations are the responsibility of extraterrestrial visitors, members of Satanic cults, or some unknown government agency.

"Dr. Richard Prine, Forensic Veterinarian, Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory (LASL), Los Alamos, New Mexico, discounted the possibility that the mutilations had been done by anything but predators. He said he had examined six carcasses and in his opinion predators were responsible for the mutilation of all six.

"Dr. Claire Hibbs, a representative of the State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico, said he recently came to New Mexico, but that prior to that he examined some mutilation findings in Kansas and Nebraska. Dr. Hibbs said the mutilations fell into three categories: animals killed and mutilated by predators and scavengers, animals mutilated after death by 'sharp instruments' and animals mutilated by pranksters.

Anthropologist Dr. Peter Van Arsdale of the University of Denver has bluntly dismissed theories such as Satanic cults and UFOs as explanations for the cattle mutilations.

"Tommy Blann, Lewisville, Texas, told the conference he has been studying UFO activities for twenty-two years and mutilations for twelve years. He explained that animal mutilations date back to the early 1800's in England and Scotland. He also pointed out that animal mutilations are not confined to cattle, but cited incidents of mutilation of horses, dogs, sheep, and rabbits. He also said the mutilations are not only nationwide, but international in scope.

"Chief Raleigh Tafoya, Jicarilla Apache Tribe, and Walter Dasheno, Governor, Santa Clara Pueblo, each spoke briefly to the

conference. Both spoke of the cattle which had been found mutilated on their respective Indian lands. Chief Tafoya said some of his people who have lost livestock have been threatened.

"Carl W. Whiteside, Investigator, Colorado Bureau of Investigation, told the conference that between April and December 1975, his Bureau investigated 203 reports of cattle mutilations."

One month later, the district attorney's office for Santa Fe, New Mexico, secured $50,000 in funding to allow a detailed study of the evidence to commence—specifically in New Mexico. Very suspiciously, when it was announced that the program was going ahead, the FBI noted that the mutilations came to a sudden halt. This gave rise to deep suspicions that the mutilators were all too human and, having heard of the planned investigation, hastily backed away until matters calmed down—which they did when the number of new reports trailed off to nothingness.

With a distinct lack of new data to go on, the ambitious program was left to study a mere handful of cases—all of which it relegated to the work of predators and absolutely nothing else. Hardly surprisingly, this gave rise to the suspicions among conspiracy theorists that this was the goal all along: launch an investigation and assert that the mutilations were the work of predators and nothing else whatsoever, then close the investigation down. If that was the case, then it worked all too well: the world of officialdom walked away from the mutilation problem, asserting that it had resolved the entire matter in down-to-earth terms and assuring the public and the ranching community that they had nothing to worry about.

Evidently, however, they did have something to worry about: no sooner had the project closed down when the mutilations began again, and they still continue to this day. Whether the work of the

government, the military, satanic cults, or deadly extraterrestrials, all that can be said of the cattle mutilations is that, officially, at least, they are no longer of any interest to the FBI or to any other arm of officialdom.

While none of the above data confirms the controversial claims of Danielle B., it does at least demonstrate that a real, disturbing cattle-mutilation phenomenon exists—and just perhaps a phenomenon that has huge, alien insects at its heart.

JELLYFISH IN THE SKY

Make mention of UFOs, and it will likely conjure up imagery of flying saucers and diminutive, black-eyed, large-headed E.T.s and alien abductions. At least some UFOs, however, may have absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with visitors from faraway solar systems and galaxies. Welcome to the world of a man named Trevor James Constable. Having investigated the UFO phenomenon extensively, Constable penned two books on the subject: They Live in the Sky was published in 1958, and Sky Creatures followed two decades later. In deeply studying the UFO phenomenon, Constable came to a fascinating conclusion concerning what he believed to be the truth of the mystery surrounding flying saucers.

Constable's conclusion was that UFOs are not nuts-and-bolts craft from distant worlds but living creatures that inhabit the

highest levels of Earth's atmosphere. While many UFO investigators scoffed at Constable's undeniably unique ideas, none could deny that his theory was well thought out. Describing them as "critters," Constable believed the creatures to be unicellular and amoebalike but having metallic-like outer shells, which gave them their flying saucerstyle appearances. He also believed that they varied in size from extremely small to lengths approaching half a mile—which, admittedly, accords with what UFO witnesses tell us: the assumed alien craft that people have reported do indeed vary from a few inches to massive, so-called "mother-ships."

If the skies of our planet are constantly populated by an untold number of airborne critters, then why don't we see them for what they really are—and on a regular basis? Constable had a notable and engaging theory for this, too: he believed that the aerial things reflect infrared light, which is not visible to the naked, human eye. However, Constable also believed that the critters can change color, which explains why they are occasionally seen, sometimes quite out of the blue. It's not a case that they are here one minute and gone the next. For Constable, that was only how it appears. They're always here, in massive numbers; we're just not physically able to see them in their natural state. Constable also concluded that this theory explained why some UFO witnesses had photographed UFOs but had not seen anything out of the ordinary when they took the picture. In other words, when it comes to Constable's sky critters, the camera can see what the human eye cannot.

Constable believed that even though the sky beasts possessed formidable powers that allowed them to remain out of sight—for the most part—they could be seen and photographed if one specifically used an infrared cine-film and a suitable filter. Constable even put his theories into practice in the heart of the

Mojave Desert. He claimed to have had considerable success in California's Lucerne Valley. Constable did not shy away from publishing his photos, which continue to provoke a great deal of debate—and, at times, unbridled fury—among the UFO faithful. It's important to note, however, that Constable's claims did not stand alone.

In May 1977, a UFO investigator named Richard Toronto—who had developed a fascination for Constable's theories—decided to try to replicate Constable's photos, also in the Mojave Desert. He claimed considerable success. As with Constable's pictures—which some researchers felt showed nothing stranger than aircraft landing lights, stars, and planets—down-to-earth claims for the anomalies abounded—at least, they did among those UFO enthusiasts who didn't want to see their cherished extraterrestrial theories questioned.

In his books, Trevor James Constable speculates that UFOs are not machines but living, unicellular beings that sport metallic shells for protection.

Another theory exists for what both Trevor James Constable and Richard Toronto photographed. It's a truly fascinating one, which was postulated by the late UFO and paranormal investigator D. Scott Rogo. It was his opinion—or, perhaps, his "strong suspicion" would be better terminology—that both men had unknowingly created the sky monsters from the depths of their imaginations and subconscious. Their psychic abilities allowed them to project their mind monsters externally to the point where they had quasi-independent lives and could even be caught on camera.

Whatever the truth of the matter, today, decades after he first began formulating his undeniably alternative theory for what UFOs might be, Trevor James Constable still retains a faithful following who believe our skies are not filled with extraterrestrials but with large, flying, amoebalike monsters.

It just so happens that Trevor James Constable was deeply interested in the mystery of the Men in Black, which is a mystery extensively addressed in the pages of this book.

March 31, 2016, was the day on which Trevor James Constable died. Albert Bender—in almost singlehanded fashion—kicked off the MIB controversy. Bender had passed on just two days before Constable. It just so transpires that Constable had a deep interest in the Bender/MIB affair and concluded, back in 1962, that Bender's MIB were definitively occult-based in nature and origin. How do I know this? Because back in 1962, UFO writer Grey Barker published a follow-up, and far less known, title to Albert Bender's Flying Saucers and the Three Men. It went by the moniker of Bender Mystery Confirmed. It was, basically, a one-hundred-page collection of letters from readers of Bender's book who wanted to offer their thoughts and theories on its contents. One of those people was Trevor James Constable. The author of They Live in the Sky and someone who believed that at least some UFOs are living, jellyfish-like creatures, Constable wrote the following letter to Grey Barker, which the latter duly published in Bender Mystery Confirmed:

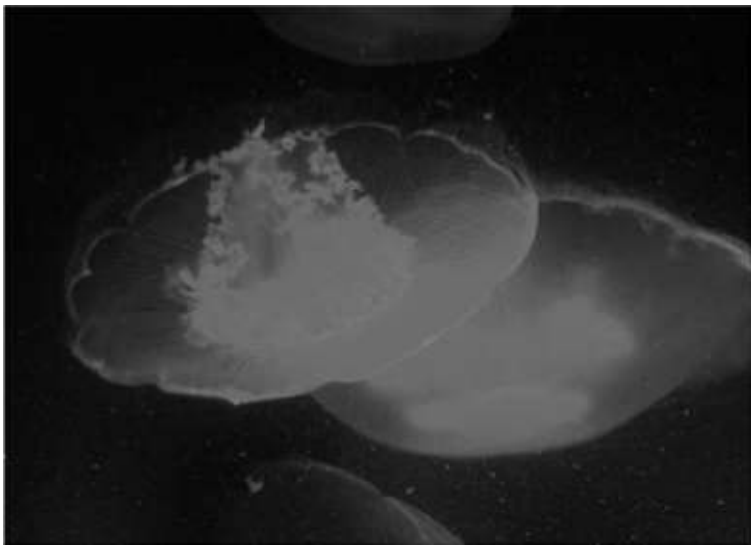
"Dear Grey,

"It is difficult indeed for me, as an occultist with some

firsthand experience of this field of UFOs, to sort out Bender's journeys back and forth across the threshold line between the physical and the astral. A biometric examination of Al Bender would probably indicate similar things to what it revealed about certain other researchers—total inability to distinguish between events on two planes of reality.

"Bender's honesty I do not for a moment doubt. His discrimination I would deem non-existent. It seems almost incredible that the man could relate the full story of the construction of his chamber of horrors in the attic in the way Bender has. This is what convinces me of his honesty. Nothing could be more logical, in an occult way, than that the invisible entities he invited by the preparation of this locale, should indeed manifest to him, and thereafter proceed to obsess him for a protracted period, using hypnotic techniques that brought the man completely under their control.

"As to the nature of the entities involved, it seems that my writings about the 'imperceptible physical' as source of many space ships, or so-called space ships, are only too close to the truth. Indeed, if Bender's experience has any value, I'd like to suggest that it certainly illuminates a re-reading of They Live in the Sky. I don't believe I know of any case quite like Bender's, where a man seemingly oblivious to the reality and laws of the occult, brought upon himself the energetic attention of aggressive occult forces. Certainly, the man can thank some kind of Divine intervention for the preservation of his sanity—if everything he writes is true.



Are alien craft really jellyfish-like creatures that soar above the surface of our planet?

"Assuming that Bender has been truthful and honest, I would say that the lesson of his experiences is this. For the understanding of the UFOs and all the bewildering phenomena connected in this field, a working knowledge of occult science is indispensable. This lesson, driven home in innumerable ways since saucers came to mankind, is given new force with the Bender book. But few there will be who will heed it.

"It does not surprise me to learn of the various manifestations you report—in fact, an occultist would be surprised if they did not occur. The psychic lady in Cleveland undoubtedly provides enough prana ["prana" being a Sanskrit word meaning "life-force"], voluntarily or involuntarily, to permit the near manifestations of low grade entities drawn to her aura by her concentration on the book. The odor of drains and these occurrences in the toilet are old hat to occult students. It might give you pause to wonder just what you are setting on foot for some people, and undoubtedly drawing to yourself. Not for the sake of money did I suggest that you leave this kind of thing behind! The

impulse to burn the book is mighty interesting. This impulse springs from the best kind of intuition. When the Fire Gods come, everyone else in the unseen departs. It's as simple as that, so the lady in question would have been well advised to consume the book in fire, as her intuition so rightly prompted her. The lady who returned the book was also wise, if she felt that way. Send it back to its source—a sound occult system of personal defense, if no higher knowledge is at the individual's disposal."

What Constable was talking about here—with regard to one reader burning her copy of Albert Bender's Flying Saucers and the Three Men and another one who felt so unclean and infected after handling the book that she felt the need to mail it back to Barker—were other people who had written to Grey Barker and whose accounts Barker privately shared with Constable.

When I dug out the old copies in my possession of the correspondence between Barker and Constable—specifically for inclusion in an online article on the pair—the latter's words about the woman's decision to "burn the book" instantly reminded me of the words in my introduction to The Black Diary, parts of which, in draft form, were written around eight months before Constable died. I wrote, you'll recall, that "if I were to tell you to burn this book after reading it, I would only be half-joking. In some of my darker moments, there's absolutely no joking about it, at all."

From flying, alien jellyfish to the macabre Men in Black: Trevor James Constable had a strange and amazing life.

LOCH NESS MONSTER

The Loch Ness Monster: just about everyone has heard of it. Many people claim to have seen the long-necked, humped leviathan of the deep. Some have even photographed and filmed it. Nessie, as the beast is affectionately known, has been a staple part of the world of the unexplained since 1933, when the phenomenon of the monster exploded in spectacular, planetwide fashion. Since then, millions of people have flocked to the shores of the 22.5-mile-long and 744-foot-deep loch, all in the hopes of seeing the elusive creature. Attempts have been made to seek out Nessie with sonar equipment, aircraft, balloons, and even submarines.

Theories abound as to what Nessie is—or, far more likely and correctly, what the Nessies are. Certainly, the most captivating theory and the one that the Scottish Tourist Board, moviemakers, and the general public find most appealing is that which suggests

the monsters are surviving pockets of plesiosaurs. They were marine reptiles that the domain of zoology assures us became extinct tens of millions of years ago. The possibility that the monsters are actually giant-sized salamanders holds sway in more than a few quarters, as does the idea that perhaps massive eels are the culprits. Scenarios also exist involving sturgeon, oversized turtles, catfish, and even crocodiles, giant frogs, and hippopotami —but what if the Nessies are nothing less than extraterrestrial beings? While it might sound outrageous to even suggest a thing, the fact is that a lot of UFO activity has occurred at Loch Ness.

From August 30 to September 20, 1975, the BBC ran "Terror of the Zygons." It was a four-part Dr. Who story broadcast on Saturday evenings, which put an interesting spin on the story of the Loch Ness Monster. In much the same way that the monster of the 1970 movie The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes was actually an advanced piece of machinery—namely, a carefully camouflaged submarine—so was the Nessie that tangled with the world's most famous, fictional time traveler, Dr. Who. "Terror of the Zygons" tells the story of an alien race, the Zygons of the title, whose home world was decimated and destroyed by solar flares centuries ago. As a result, they decide to create a new home for themselves. No prizes for guessing the planned location of that new home: Earth. The solitary band of Zygons that successfully makes the journey to Earth has the distinct misfortune to crash in none other than Loch Ness. They remain there for hundreds of years, patiently planning for the day when they can finally claim Earth as their own.

To help them in their quest to seek control of the planet, the Zygons employ the use of a terrifying, huge monster known as the

Skarasen. It's an ancient beast of the deep waters that the Zygons turn into a cyborg—a half-flesh, half-machine being that does their bidding and lives in Loch Ness. It has, over time, of course, become known as the Loch Ness Monster. That bidding includes a wave of mysterious and violent attacks on oil rigs in the North Sea.

In an episode of Dr. Who it turns out that Nessie is a cyborg developed by an alien race.

It's up to Dr. Who and his comrades, Sarah Jane Smith, Harry Sullivan, and Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart, to defeat the deadly Zygons, who are shapeshifting monsters that can take on the form of any human being they choose. Fortunately, Dr. Who finally saves the day, as he always does, but not before the

Skarasen/Nessie wreaks havoc in and around London's River Thames and the Zygons do their very best to take hold of the planet.

Undoubtedly, the writing team behind the story had some knowledge of the lore and legend of Nessie. After all, the creature is presented as not just an unknown animal. Far from it, in fact. In addition, the story does not shy away from the UFO-themed connections to Loch Ness, and let's not overlook something else of great importance: the masters and manipulators of the Loch Ness Monster, the Zygons, are diabolical shapeshifters, just the like the murderous kelpies and water horses of centuries long past that haunted Loch Ness and terrified the local folk. Although strictly fiction, "Terror of the Zygons" provided an intriguing and thought-provoking scenario to explain the mystery of the Loch Ness Monster, and just perhaps, fact is stranger than fiction. Maybe, they sometimes blend together in extraordinary ways, as we shall now see.

Jan-Ove Sundberg, twenty-three at the time, on August 14, 1971, at some point between 8:30 and 9:30 A.M., was in a section of woodland above Foyers Bay, Loch Ness, when he came across something staggering—no, not a fully grown Nessie roaming the landscape. Sundberg nearly stumbled upon a landed UFO and its presumed extraterrestrial crew! The craft was situated in a clearing, giving the impression that its pilots had chosen the site deliberately since it gave them the opportunity to land and hide their presence until Sundberg inadvertently foiled their plan.

The craft was, to say the least, a decidedly odd one. It was

around thirty feet in length, dark gray in color, and cigar shaped. It had a significantly sized section on top that reminded Sundberg of a large handle. The overall image was that of a giant iron used for getting the creases out of clothing. Amazement turned to concern when a trio of figures came out of the trees: all humanoid in shape, of approximately human proportions, and dressed in outfits that closely resembled the outfits worn by divers. In fact, at first, Sundberg assumed that they were divers from a then-active team that was searching the depths of Loch Ness for the monster. It became apparent that the three were not divers, however, when they entered the odd-looking craft via a panel and the craft took to the skies, vertically, for about sixty feet, after which it began to move horizontally over the hills in the direction of nearby Loch Mhor.

Nessie seeker and author Ted Holiday made what was, perhaps, an inevitable observation on the Sundberg affair. It was an observation obviously prompted by his knowledge of how the Nessies seemed to negatively impact on photos and photographers. Holiday, by his own admission, found it extremely curious—but very typical—that someone at Loch Ness, when confronted by something so incredible and mysterious, should have been unable to secure photographic evidence of its existence. Notably, Sundberg explained this by stating that he felt a sense of paralysis come over him.

Actually, Sundberg did manage to take just one photo, but it was one that researcher Stuart Campbell came to believe showed nothing unusual. Indeed, it's important to note that Campbell believed Sundberg's sighting to have been nothing but a strange form of hallucination—which, inevitably, means we have to be very careful how, and to what extent or otherwise, we embrace the case. Whatever the answer, it's intriguing that Sundberg claimed on

his return to Sweden that he was threatened by Men in Black, experienced supernatural events in his home—such as poltergeist activity—and received odd phone calls. Three years later, Ted Holiday had his very own supernaturally themed MIB encounter at Loch Ness, as will soon be demonstrated.

Going back to the matter of that curious paralysis that reportedly prevented Sundberg from capturing close-up imagery of the craft and crew, the husband-and-wife team of Colin and Janet Bord have, like Holiday, noted that camera-based problems have always been issues for Nessie seekers—in fact, since the very year in which the megascale Nessie fever began. The Bords say: "When Hugh Grey took the now famous photograph of the Loch Ness Monster on 12 November 1933 he did in fact take five shots but four were blank."

The inference is obvious: some force is at work, both in and around Loch Ness, that prevents people from getting too close to the truth of the things they so intensely seek—and it prevents them in what is clearly a toying, manipulative fashion, maybe even in a cruel and malevolent fashion.

What is the connection between the Loch Ness and UFOs? Is it just coincidence that an alien craft was spotted in the same place as the mysterious, cryptid lake beast?

Finally on this case, we have something rather synchronistic. August 1971, when Sundberg claimed his UFO encounter, was the very same month that I traveled to Loch Ness for the first time, as a six-year-old, with my parents. It was the height of the regular summer holidays, and the U.K. schools being closed for a customary period of six weeks allowed us to spend much-welcomed time at the water's edge. Although I saw nothing strange on that day, and neither did my parents, it was a life-changing experience—one that eventually set me on a quest for the truth surrounding the Nessies. It would be appropriately weird—and weirdly appropriate—if a young Nick Redfern was unknowingly in the presence of both monsters and aliens, the former lurking in the loch and the latter hiding in the surrounding trees.

Now it's time to address the matter of the Loch Ness Monster and the Men in Black.

As dawn broke on one particular morning in 1974, Nessie hunter Ted Holiday took a walk down to the loch. What a catastrophic mistake that was. As he did so, Holiday could not fail to see a man, at a distance of around ninety feet, standing atop the slope that led directly down to Loch Ness. This was no normal man, however. It may not even have been a man at all. Whoever—or whatever—this curious character was, he was dressed entirely in black from head to toe. Whereas most people who go to Loch Ness focus their attentions on the deep waters in the hope that they just might be lucky enough to see something monstrous rear its head, this character had his back to the loch and was staring directly at Holiday, who later commented that as the figure focused on him, "I felt a strong sensation of malevolence, cold and passionless."

The man appeared to be dressed in what Holiday described as black plastic. His hands were gloved (black, too), and his head was covered by something that looked like a motorcycle helmet. No surprises on its color. Goggles covered his eyes, and even his nose and mouth were covered by a black band, possibly made of cloth. Holiday tentatively walked toward the definitive Man in Black. Even when Holiday was mere feet away, the MIB neither moved nor acknowledged his presence. Most terrifying of all, no eyes appeared to be behind the goggles. Shocked, Holiday continued walking for about ten feet and then stopped.

It was Holiday's quickly thought-out intention to pretend to

fall on the grass and reach out to the man for support as he did so—specifically to see whether he was physical in form or some kind of intangible specter. Holiday was prevented from doing so, however, when the sounds of whistling and unintelligible whisperings filled the air and the MIB vanished—as in demate-rialized, literally. As Holiday—now petrified out of his wits—shakily scanned the half-mile of open road that dominated the landscape, it became clear to him that the man could not possibly have made a stealthy escape in conventional fashion. Stunned to his core, Holiday tried to reconcile the whole thing as nothing but a bizarre hallucination—a theory that, he knew deep down, simply wasn't viable. The specter of the thing in black remained like an albatross around Holiday's neck.

Of equal fascination—and of deep relevance to this story—back in September 1866, a mournful-looking man in black attire was sighted on hills near Lochindorb. He was seen—by a terrified farmer—strapped to the back of a large, fiendish dog that was prowling the same hills. The farmer didn't wait around to see what might happen next, and he fled the hills for the safety of his home, fearful that the hound might wish to make him its next victim. It was probably a very wise move.

He was seen—by a terrified farmer—strapped to the back of a large, fiendish dog that was prowling the same hills.

This aspect of Ted Holiday's quest for the truth of the Loch Ness Monster and his Man in Black experience has a decidedly sinister sequel. One year later, in 1974, Holiday's creature-seeking

excursions were suddenly cut short by a serious heart attack right at the very spot where the MIB manifested and then vanished around twelve months earlier. A warning, perhaps, to Holiday that he should walk away from the matter of the Loch Ness Monster—and walk away now—while he still had the chance before the reaper came calling for his very mind and soul.

More UFO-themed Loch Ness weirdness hit the news in 2011, specifically in August of that year. The United Kingdom's Daily Express newspaper splashed a headline across its pages that read: "Alert as UFO is sighted over Loch Ness." The story was, undoubtedly, an odd one. The fact that something occurred does not appear to be in doubt. It is, however, the nature of the "something" that remains open to debate. It was on the night of August 20, 2011, that a number of people—many being completely independent of each other—encountered something unusual in the skies over Loch Ness.

Witness descriptions of the movements of the object fell into two camps: those who said that they saw it descending into the loch and those who maintained that it was hovering above the expansive waters. As for the appearance of the UFO, it very much depended on who one asked, but whatever it was, it quickly caught the attention of the emergency services, who were contacted by worried locals.

Martin Douglas of the Loch Ness Lifeboat Station crew told the Daily Mail that someone in the area had seen what, superficially at least, resembled a microlight or a hang glider, which seemed to enter the loch in a controlled flight. Oddly,

however, others who saw the unknown craft described it as being somewhat balloon shaped. Still others opined that it looked eerily like a fully open parachute. Therefore, no real, solid consensus existed on what was seen—or what wasn't seen. Crew member Vivian Bailey added that although the mystery was not resolved, the emergency services were pleased that concerned people had quickly contacted them.

All of this has a very odd afterword, though.

Exactly one month previous, on July 21, law enforcement offices in the vicinity of the 125-mile-long Lake Champlain—which covers parts of New York, Vermont, and Quebec, Canada—were inundated with calls from worried locals, all of whom had seen a balloonlike object fall into the huge lake near Rouses Point, New York. Police and Border Patrol personnel were quickly dispatched and scoured the area but with no luck. After around four hours, the search was called off. It remained a mystery. It should be noted, however, that, just like Loch Ness, Lake Champlain has its own resident monster. Champ, as the creature is famously known, is, like Nessie, a large, long-necked leviathan that has taken on near-legendary proportions.

Is it only coincidence that two lakes on opposite sides of the world—both with resident monsters—should have been the sites of unusual, and very similar, UFO-like activity within a month of each other, or is this yet further evidence of profound paranormal weirdness wherever lake monsters lurk?

In the summer of 2015, the controversy of the Loch Ness Monster was taken to a new height—as in literally. That was when

the mystery was yet again linked to the matter of high-flying UFOs. As we have already seen, nothing is new about a Nessie–UFO link: Jan-Ove Sundberg claimed an encounter with a landed unidentified flying object at Loch Ness in 1971, Ted Holiday had a sighting of a menacing Man in Black at the loch three years later, and in August 2011, numerous people caught sight of an unidentified flying object over the loch. As for the 2015 affair, it was yet another weird addition to the Nessie mystery.

The three key players in the story were Alan Betts and his wife, Anna, and Anna's mother, Tatiana. The family, from the English city of York, were holidaying in Scotland. It was April 2015, and the three were staying at a cottage near Urquhart Castle —which, as has been demonstrated in these pages, is an undeniable hotspot for Nessie encounters. While at the loch, as is the case for practically everyone who visits there, they took a good number of photos. It wasn't until the Bettses returned home, however, that they realized just how weird one of their vacation pictures was. Taken by Tatiana, it appeared to show a pair of anomalous objects in the sky right over Loch Ness. As if Nessie wasn't enough of a mystery on its own!

Taken by Tatiana, it [the photo] appeared to show a pair of anomalous objects in the sky right over Loch Ness.

Alan—the director of a refrigerating company—said when the story hit the headlines two months later that the timing of their vacation was fortuitous. The weather was pretty much perfect: it was bright and sunny for almost the entire time. However, on one

particular day, after the Bettses spent hours checking out the area, things changed. The sunny weather was suddenly gone, and everything quickly became dark and gloomy, the rain pouring in definitive deluge style. Tatiana decided to take a photo of the moody skies—which proved to be crucial to the story. It was only after the family got back home and downloaded their holiday pictures onto their PC that they noticed something odd on that particular photo. It was a pair of brightly lit objects that appeared to be flying over Loch Ness, which weren't seen at the time Tatiana took the picture. Alan was a self-confessed skeptic but admitted that he was at a loss to explain what the camera had captured. Interestingly, Alan added: "Our Akita dog, Yuka, was strangely unsettled that night."

Anna, when approached by the Huffington Post for comment on the growing controversy surrounding the photo, said: "We can say 100 percent that the camera was perfectly fine. It was raining very heavily; there were no lights in the house to resemble the objects in any shape or form."

While no one suggested that the Bettses had deliberately faked the photo—not even the skeptics believed that—some commentators suspected that the entire matter could be explained away via light reflection. Both Anna and Alan felt that such an explanation was unlikely, noting that no lights were on when the picture was taken.

At the time of this writing, that's pretty much where things stand today. The Bettses are sure they photographed something unusual, while the skeptics are positive that the case can be explained in wholly rational terms.

As all of the above demonstrates, the matter of UFOs and the Loch Ness Monster runs deep. Just perhaps, despite how sensational and unlikely it all sounds, Nessie really is an

extraterrestrial entity—perhaps, even, not unlike the fictional version presented in the BBC's long-running Dr. Who series.

MAD GASSER OF MATTOON

Back in the 1940s, the people of Mattoon, Illinois, were plagued by a sinister character that became known as the Mad Gasser of Mattoon. The name was a very apt one: the mysterious figure gassed his victims as a means to gain entry to their property and to take advantage of whatever caught his eye. His actions followed a similar wave of attacks in the 1930s in Botetourt County, Virginia, but, today at least, let's focus on the later events. On the night of August 31, 1944, a man named Urban Raef was overcome by a mysterious gas that provoked sickness, weakness, and vomiting. Despite Mr. Raef 's fear that the house had a gas leak, such was not the case. Raef 's wife—to her horror—found herself briefly paralyzed.

Also among the Gasser's victims was Mrs. Bert Kearney, who also lived in Mattoon. On September 1, 1944, approximately an

hour before the witching hour struck, Mrs. Kearney was hit by what was described as a "sickening, sweet odor in the bedroom." As was the case with Mrs. Raef, the "gas" caused temporary paralysis in her legs. It also resulted in a burning sensation to her lips and a parched feeling in her mouth.

Mrs. Kearney cried out for her sister, Martha, who came running to see what was going on. She, too, was unable to avoid the powerful smell. In no time, the police were on the scene, but the Mad Gasser was nowhere to be seen—at least, not for a while. As Bert Kearney drove home—after his shift as a cab driver was over—he caught sight of a darkly dressed man peering through the window of the Kearneys' bedroom. It was a thin man wearing a tight, dark cap on his head. He quickly fled the scene.

In the wake of the curious affair, other reports of the Mad Gasser's infernal activities surfaced to the extent that both the local police and the FBI got involved. The townsfolk were plunged into states of fear and paranoia. While some cases were put down to nothing more than hysteria, that was not the beginning and end of the story. For example, Thomas V. Wright, the commissioner of public health, said: "There is no doubt that a gas maniac exists and has made a number of attacks. But many of the reported attacks are nothing more than hysteria. Fear of the gas man is entirely out of proportion to the menace of the relatively harmless gas he is spraying. The whole town is sick with hysteria."

Victims of the Mad Gasser(s) were in their homes when they smelled strange odors and suffered everything from vomiting to temporary paralysis. Fortunately, none of the Mattoon residents died as a result.

The mystery was never resolved to the satisfaction of everyone. One theory offers that the Mad Gasser of Mattoon was nothing stranger than a bunch of kids. Writer Scott Maruna suggests that the Gasser was a University of Illinois student, Farley Llewellyn, who had a deep knowledge of chemistry and went to school with the initial victims. Other theories include burglars and even extraterrestrials—but another possibility exists.

Perhaps the most intriguing explanation for the Mad Gasser of Mattoon appears in the now declassified files of the U.S. government. Thanks to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, we now know that one particularly notable theory being secretly pursued by U.S. law enforcement officials was taken very seriously—namely, that the Gasser was not a solitary individual but an entire group of Mad Gassers. A secret

society, one might say. According to the now released files, Illinois authorities had heard disturbing stories of a clandestine cult operating in northern Illinois that was inspired by the work of the "Great Beast" himself, Aleister Crowley—specifically by Crowley's position on the matter of sacrifice, including human sacrifice.

Crowley said of this issue: "It is necessary for us to consider carefully the problems connected with the bloody sacrifice, for this question is indeed traditionally important in Magick. Nigh all ancient Magick revolves around this matter. In particular all the Osirian religions—the rites of the Dying God—refer to this. The slaying of Osiris and Adonis; the mutilation of Attis; the cults of Mexico and Peru; the story of Hercules or Melcarth; the legends of Dionysus and of Mithra, are all connected with this one idea. In the Hebrew religion we find the same thing inculcated. The first ethical lesson in the Bible is that the only sacrifice pleasing to the Lord is the sacrifice of blood; Abel, who made this, finding favour with the Lord, while Cain, who offered cabbages, was rather naturally considered a cheap sport. The idea recurs again and again. We have the sacrifice of the Passover, following on the story of Abraham's being commanded to sacrifice his firstborn son, with the idea of the substitution of animal for human life. The annual ceremony of the two goats carries out this in perpetuity. And we see again the domination of this idea in the romance of Esther, where Haman and Mordecai are the two goats or gods; and ultimately in the presentation of the rite of Purim in Palestine, where Jesus and Barabbas happened to be the Goats in that particular year of which we hear so much, without agreement on the date."

Crowley continued: "Enough has now been said to show that the bloody sacrifice has from time immemorial been the most considered part of Magick.… It would be unwise to condemn as

irrational the practice of those savages who tear the heart and liver from an adversary, and devour them while yet warm. In any case, it was the theory of the ancient Magicians that any living being is a storehouse of energy varying in quantity according to the size and health of the animal, and in quality according to its mental and moral character. At the death of the animal this energy is liberated suddenly.

The first ethical lesson in the Bible is that the only sacrifice pleasing to the Lord is the sacrifice of blood. …

"The animal should therefore be killed within the Circle, or the Triangle, as the case may be, so that its energy cannot escape. An animal should be selected whose nature accords with that of the ceremony—thus, by sacrificing a female lamb one would not obtain any appreciative quantity of the fierce energy useful to a Magician who was invoking Mars. In such a case a ram would be more suitable. And this ram should be virgin—the whole potential of its original total energy should not have been diminished in any way.

"For the highest spiritual working one must accordingly choose that victim which contains the greatest and purest force. A male child of perfect innocence and high intelligence is the most satisfactory and suitable victim. For evocations it would be more convenient to place the blood of the victim in the Triangle—the idea being that the spirit might obtain from the blood this subtle but physical substance which was the quintessence of its life in such a manner as to enable it to take on a visible and tangible

shape."

It was Crowley's words that prompted the "Illinois sect," as the group is referenced in the files, to explore the issue of human sacrifice for personal gain. A budding author in Decatur, Illinois (whose name is deleted from the declassified papers) wrote a long and rambling letter in which he claimed personal knowledge of the group in question. Supposedly, its members had engaged in the ritualistic sacrifice of animals from 1942 to 1943 and were, by 1944, ready to do the unthinkable: namely, kill people according to ancient rite and ritual. Our unnamed author further claimed that the "gassing attempts" were undertaken by group members as a means to try to render unconscious, and kidnap, the largely female victims and then end their lives according to infernal, occult beliefs.

Although the matter was taken seriously by the authorities, the odd and controversial saga fizzled out when suspicions rose that the author was lying and was simply trying to insert himself into the saga of the Mad Gasser of Mattoon for two particular reasons: to whip up the controversy and then write his very own book on the subject. On the other hand, perhaps some truth to the matter existed, after all, and the Mad Gasser was actually nothing less than a cult of Mad Gassers with human sacrifice on their dangerous minds.

Another theory is that the Mad Gasser was something akin to the terror-inducing Men in Black of UFO/alien lore. He dressed in dark clothes, was thin, and wore a dark cap that fit tightly on his head—which sounds very much like the MIB. He tried to make his

way into homes in the dead of night and ensured that the homeowners were pretty much unable to do anything about it. This is all very reminiscent of the strange saga of Albert Bender, a man who pretty much began the early 1950s wave of Men in Black encounters. From his home in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Bender ran the International Flying Saucer Bureau until a trio of darkly clothed, fedora-hat-wearing MIB paid him a visit and told him to quit digging into the world of UFOs or else.

No knock at the front door occurred, though, nor did grim-faced officials of "the government" flash ID cards. Bender's MIB were much stranger: they were pale-faced, thin, and sporting shining eyes. From 1952 to 1953, Bender had repeated encounters with the Men in Black—almost exclusively at night and into the early-morning hours. They typically materialized in his attic-based bedroom, which he called his "Chamber of Horrors" (Bender was a horror movie fanatic and well-versed in the occult). When I say "materialized," I mean they walked through walls and windows.

The Mad Gasser has been described as thin, wearing dark clothes, and sporting a tight cap on his head, but little else is known of him.

Something else to note was that on almost every occasion that the MIB appeared, it was amid a powerful odor—in Bender's case, something akin to sulfur. Bender, like so many of the residents of Mattoon just three years earlier, was overcome by nausea and felt faint, light-headed, and weak when the MIB turned up—so, in both Mattoon in the mid-1940s and in Bridgeport in the early 1950s, we have darkly clad, thin men, wearing equally dark hats and caps, entering homes in the dead of night, and all incidents were associated with powerful odors that badly affected the victims.

Of course, it might be said that a down-to-earth explanation exists for the Mattoon affair. On the other hand, maybe the Mad Gasser of Mattoon should be renamed the Mad MIB of Mattoon. Still on the matter of the Mad Gasser having links to the MIB is the saga of famed cryptozoologist Loren Coleman. Coleman is undoubtedly the leading figure in cryptozoology, whose involvement in the subject of creature seeking dates back decades and is the author of such books as Bigfoot! and, with Mark A. Hall, True Giants. Also, he runs the International Cryptozoology Museum, which is based in Portland, Maine. In the early years of the 1970s, Coleman spent a not-inconsiderable amount of time digging into the mystery and controversy surrounding the Mad Gasser of Mattoon as well as other, similar entities. One of them went by the unforgettable moniker of the Enema Bandit, and no, that's not a joke!

The Bandit was, in reality, a man with a far less bizarre real name: Michael Hubert Kenyon. Clearly disturbed, the Bandit, in Coleman's own words, "targeted coeds, picking out the most

overweight of two or three bound women, and gave them enemas."

As Coleman dug further into the activities of this strange character—whose odd attacks on women paralleled the actions of the Mad Gasser of decades earlier—he found that the Bandit had targeted women in California, Kansas, Illinois, and Oklahoma. Coleman explains his reasons for looking into the matter: "At the time, as I often do, I was writing individual letters to many newspapers in the country, trying to track down what they had published on what I thought was a very human criminal. The pattern of similar activities that were directed to mainly women victims interested me in terms of the configuration of the Mad Gasser attacks. I wanted to make certain that any bizarre human examples that seemed to follow the random model of the Gasser be compared."

It was at the height of Coleman's investigations that … something happened….

At the time, Coleman and his wife at the time, Toni-Marie, were living in Eldorado, Illinois. Late one night, someone knocked on the door of their apartment. Coleman tells the strange story:

"A darkly suited, very thin man who said he was with the Decatur Police Department stepped into my life. He identified himself as Detective Lieutenant Applegate. I don't recall seeing an I.D., as those were much more trusting days. He said he was checking to see if I was the Enema Bandit, and why I was digging into this story. He said I should stop researching this series of cases. It was a startling encounter. He justified this by noting that since the Enema Bandit appeared to like media attention—he did not say how he knew this—I was targeting myself with all my letters asking for articles on the Enema Bandit. It seemed to make sense at the time."

Things got a little bit ominous when, just a couple of days later, Coleman put a call in to the Decatur Police Department, only to find that they did not have a Det. Lt. Applegate. Coleman says that, on hearing this news, he came to wonder who, exactly, "Applegate might really have been." It got even more chilling, as Coleman reveals: "Years later, in doing more work on names, I discovered that 'Applegate' was another name for the Devil in some literature. It was a very spooky encounter."

As for Michael Hubert Kenyon, in December 1975, he was imprisoned for six years on six counts of armed robbery. Loren Coleman never again heard from Det. Lt. Applegate—whose late-night antics, thin appearance, dark suit, and thinly veiled warnings made to Coleman made him the absolute, definitive MIB.

MEN IN BLACK

Make mention of the mysterious Men in Black to most people, and doing so will provoke images of Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones—who played agents "J" and "K" in the series of Men in Black movies. Running from 1997 to 2012, they were phenomenally successful and entertaining productions. Indeed, the first movie alone pulled in an incredible $1.655 billion. Although the movies presented the MIB as secret agents of an equally secret agency, in the real world, the Men in Black are anything but the employees of a clandestine organization. That's right: Hollywood's take on the MIB was far different from what we really know about the Men in Black. In fact, most of the data available on the MIB strongly suggests that they are alien entities, ones whose job it is to silence witnesses to UFOs and paranormal activity. With that said, let's now take a look at the history of the Men in Black phenomenon.

The era of the flying saucer did not begin until summer 1947. It was on June 24 of that year that a pilot named Kenneth Arnold encountered a squadron of strange aircraft flying in formation near Mount Rainier, Washington State. Puzzled by what he had seen, it didn't take long before he shared his experience with the media. A phenomenon was quickly born, and it's still with us to this very day. It was not until the early 1950s, however, that the Men in Black enigma began. It was all as a result of the activities of a man named Albert Bender.

A resident of Bridgeport, Connecticut, in 1951, Bender was living in an attic that was filled with paintings of monsters, ghouls, skulls, black cats, and demons. He was obsessed with the world of the occult—both in fact and fiction. He was a big fan of Edgar Allan Poe and H. P. Lovecraft and had a deep interest in real-life tales of ghosts, the afterlife, and supernatural activity. When the UFO phenomenon began in 1947, Bender quickly began to research the subject to the extent that in 1951, he created the International Flying Saucer Bureau (IFSB). The group quickly grew with members all over the world—in the hundreds, no less. Indeed, Bender had representatives of the group as far and wide as the United Kingdom and New Zealand. All was going fine until, shortly afterward, Bender abruptly closed the group down. He made veiled allusions to friends and colleagues that he had been warned off the UFO subject by a trio of men in dark suits. One of those who Bender confided in was a writer and publisher named Grey Barker. It wasn't long before Barker embarked on the writing of a book on the silencing of Bender—even though the latter had not shared specific data on the Men in Black with Barker, just vague data. This lack of data led Barker to assume that Bender's mysterious three men were from the U.S. government. Barker spelled this all out in his 1956 book, They Knew Too Much about

Flying Saucers.

In 1962, Bender wrote his very own book on his experiences. It was titled Flying Saucers and the Three Men, and it was published by none other than Grey Barker himself. In his own story, Bender described the Men in Black as supernatural entities, dark-suited creatures who could literally walk through walls, had blazing, shining eyes, and who communicated with him via telepathy. The pale-faced ghouls made it clear that if Bender wanted to stay healthy and living, he should quit the UFO subject and immediately. At first, Bender was in no mood to be told what to do until the MIB returned and turned on the heat even more. Bender realized he was no match for the MIB. Bender did what he was told: he quit ufology and only briefly returned in 1962 to write his book and to set the record straight. For those who may not have read it, Flying Saucers and the Three Men comes across like a combination of The X-Files and a Gothic, nineteenth-century horror story. After that, Bender retreated from the scene, living out the rest of his life quietly and privately in Los Angeles, California. He died in 2016 at the age of ninety-four.

One of the most important ufologists of the mid-twentieth century, Alfred Bender founded the International Flying Saucer Bureau.

The phenomenon of the Men in Black did not begin and end with Albert Bender, though. In the immediate years afterward, more and more encounters with the MIB were reported. By the 1960s, hundreds of such reports existed. In almost all of the cases, the Men in Black were described as being very tall and extremely skinny, always wearing fedora hats. Their skin was milk-white and they had oversized eyes, which they tried to hide behind large, wraparound sunglasses. They had the ability to mind control their victims. Touching the hands of the MIB caused witnesses to fall sick—sometimes dangerously so. They didn't seem to understand how to eat or drink—or even have a comprehension of what food

is. Clearly, the MIB were not from the government. With that said, let's now take a look at some of the more significant cases of MIB activity—all of which add weight to the theory that the Men in Black are aliens rather than secret agents of the CIA, the FBI, or the NSA.

Neil Arnold hails from the centuries-old, folklore-filled county of Kent, England, and is the author of many acclaimed titles of a mysterious and supernatural nature, including Monster! The A–Z to Zooform Phenomena; Mystery Animals of the British Isles: Kent; Shadows in the Sky; and Paranormal London. Of his personal and surreal exposure to the Men in Black phenomenon, Neil relates two stories of bizarre proportions:

Although I don't recall it, when I spoke to one of the guys many years later … he stated quite categorically that we lost about an hour in time.

"During the early '90s I was with two mates out walking at night, and I'd just got the reissues of The Unexplained magazine—and we saw a strange, hanging, dull yellow light in the sky which at first we took to be a firework about to explode. It was late October. The light eventually came over us, at quite a height and the light vanished (I believe because it was on top of the object). But the underside revealed a circle of lights and we watched in amazement as this thing silently glided over the houses out of

sight. I recall a chap walking his dog who also looked up at it and everything was very quiet. Although I don't recall it, when I spoke to one of the guys many years later (I lost touch with him shortly afterwards) he stated quite categorically that we lost about an hour in time.

"This is not something I've ever taken seriously, but anyway, a month or so later I began writing a lot about MIBs and UFOs, and the same two friends visited London to buy records. It was early afternoon and we were [seated] in the McDonald's in Leicester Square. I was facing the door, one of my mates faced me with his back to the door, and my other mate sat side on. I recall looking up over my mate's shoulder (the mate who was facing me) and there was a guy sitting there.

"He was about ten feet away, staring, what I felt, right into my soul. He was about sixty to seventy years of age, he had grey hair slicked back, wide, staring, unblinking eyes. He wore a black suit, white shirt and a dark tie. Strangely, he had no food on the table, or no newspaper and he just sat staring at me. I went to mention it to my friend who was facing me and my mate just shuddered and said, 'I know!' He said he could sense this guy. We actually got up and left straight away … very odd.

"I also have a relative who in the '80s saw a UFO and went to the local phone box to report it to the newspaper. As soon as he entered the phone box a man appeared by the phone box and was staring in rather menacingly. My relative thought the man wanted to use the phone and so he motioned he wouldn't be long, but the man still stared. The man wore a dark suit. My relative came off the phone and said to the man: 'You can use it now.' But he just stood there. My relative told the newspaper that he would go to their offices to tell them of the sighting, but as soon as he got on the bus he got a shocking headache. He thought he was going to

pass out but persisted, but when he got to the office no-one working there knew what he was on about and they all said they hadn't received a call from him."

Claudia Cunningham was christened by longtime UFO researcher and author Tim Beckley as the "MIB Lady" due to her diligent and dedicated research into the phenomenon. Claudia experienced something else that many researchers of, and witnesses to, the Men in Black issue experience at least once in their lives: strange and unsettling telephone interference. She tells a strange story:

"In the late '70s I was married, and my husband was a police officer who worked nights. Being alone and bored a lot I was heavily into reading of the paranormal through my massive little library—and I was then reading Phone Calls from the Dead by Scott Rogo. The gist was that when someone died they could call you and the book gave many instances of this happening. One famous person it happened to was the late actress Ida Lupino. Her father, London stage actor Stanley, supposedly called her from beyond the grave. It was eerie reading, believe me.

"One night I was in bed reading the book and I snapped on the AM radio on my night table, and the show was WGY's talk show and they were interviewing UFO abductee Betty Hill. She said she had a lot of phone interference after seeing the UFO with her husband Barney … static, that sort of thing. I was very nervous that night listening to it and imagining my phone would ring. Imagine my shock when it DID ring. This must have been around 9 PM at night … and all I could hear was static!! Like I say, I was

heavily into reading anything about UFOs, Bermuda Triangle, etc. and I think my fear triggered the call. I mean, I think fear attracts these entities and they were having, as John Lennon would say, 'a larf' on yours truly.

"Second incident.… I was a gal who liked to go out on weekends as anyone would in their early twenties. I was dating Denny Cunningham, who I would later marry. Denny worked at the Postal Service before getting on the Albany, New York, police department and he worked nights. I would drive in from my parents' home in Glenmont to Albany and meet him, just usually for a chat and to watch Johnny Carson's Tonight Show together at his parents' home.

"On Fridays and Saturdays my parents would go out to meet another couple for dinner and drinks and not return until sometimes [between two and three] … A.M. Now, when you leave Albany en-route to my house you go down what used to be a very rural road (now it's all built up, but in the late '60s it was very desolate). You had to pass a huge Catholic cemetery and when you pulled in my driveway there was and is a field with high weeds. I always imagined that someone could be waiting for me and do something awful. I've always had a very vivid imagination!

"I did have an incident where a man followed me home one night and pulled a pen knife out of his pocket after I pulled in the driveway. He was trying to run me off the road.… It was terrifying. This happened after the incident I will now tell you about. But to return to the subject at hand, between the fear of breaking down in front of the cemetery and the field next to the house, I was always very nervous.

"I ran into the house, dreading the fact that it would be dark and I'd be alone. No one was home but 'us chickens' as my grandmother used to say. I immediately turned on a light on the

mantel and retired to my bedroom, heart beating heavily, to await my parents' return. I no sooner got to my bedroom than my brand new pink rotary phone with a PRIVATE UNLISTED number I had just gotten (free as it happens, compliments of my employer, NY Telephone Co.) rung! Denny never called me that late. He never called to see if I made it home or anything. Three people had the number—Dennis, his sister and my friend, Ann. I had just gotten the phone. No one had my number, OK?

The late actress, singer, and film director/producer Ida Lupino is one notable name in paranormal history who received a telephone call from a deceased person—her father, stage actor Stanley Lupino.

"A man with a guttural and threatening voice said very emphatically, 'Claudia? I see you just got home. Do you know

KNOW what I'm going to do with you? I'm coming over now' … and hung up!!!!!!! I thought I would absolutely die on the spot. Just think, now … a brand new phone with a brand new number … no one had it. If a neighbor saw me pull in they wouldn't have my phone number to call me, so it was no neighbor. I heard a car pull in the driveway as I was planning to run out through the cellar through the cellar door to escape … and it was my parents! Thank the Good Lord.

I did have an incident where a man followed me home one night and pulled a pen knife out of his pocket after I pulled in the driveway. He was trying to run me off the road….

"I never found out who it was, nor do I want to know. I was involved in my studying UFOs, etc. and I was always very nervous and upset around that time to begin with. As many young girls know, and especially in that time, it was very important to get married. Denny was kind of balking, and I was miserable. Besides, I hated my job … so I was nervous all the time and emotional. Again, my private fears and my interest in strange subjects must have pulled some entity to me just to frighten me. Well, whoever it was succeeded beyond their wildest dreams.

"Third incident: Denny's sister, Dorothy Jeffers, was taking care of a neighbor who had cancer, an older lady. Her family was kind of broken up and the kids never really had much of an interest in her, so Dottie would stop by and bring her groceries, call her to check on her, etc. The lady passed on … I think her name was Margaret or Minnie.

"One night about two weeks after she passed away Dottie had just finished doing the nightly dishes after dinner when the phone ring. There was much crackling on the line and static, then a faint tiny voice—unmistakably the old lady—said, 'Dottie? Thank you for taking care of me' … and the line went dead. She said it was absolutely, positively the lady's voice. Me? I think it could have been a demonic entity posing as the neighbor. At any rate, it happened, it was real … so we'll put it down to being a very great mystery."

Born on March 3, 1952, Robert A. Goerman is a native of New Kensington, Pennsylvania. As an investigative scholar of unknown and unexplained phenomena, he has been fortunate enough to have his writings featured in national magazines and serve as source material for many books and popular television shows such as Unsolved Mysteries, The Unexplained, History's Mysteries, Animal X, MonsterQuest, and Dark Matters: Twisted but True. Founded in June 2012, his Nonhuman Research Agency explores encounters with mysterious strangers, beings, and creatures and studies interspecific relationships.

Robert offers his very own insights into the MIB mystery based upon his firsthand investigations of a very weird case from the 1960s that is steeped in menace of the black-colored kind. It is a case that has led Robert to some thought-provoking theories concerning the nature and actions of the MIB, too:

"One bizarre Pennsylvania case (that I personally investigated) began on the night of January 20, 1967, when Mrs. Walter Kushner and her two daughters, Susan (17) and Tanya (14) and a close

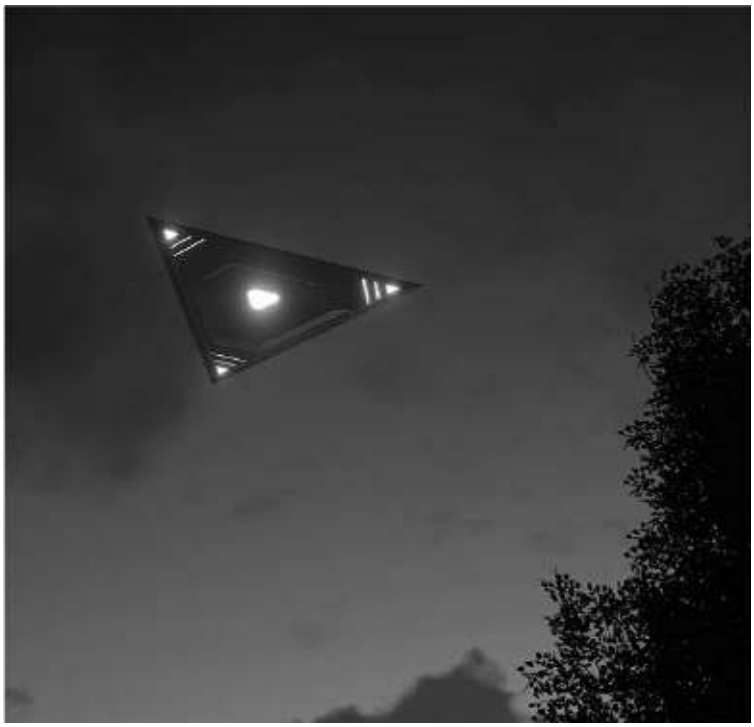
friend of the girls, Marianne Williamson (16), witnessed a brilliant UFO drop below the cloud cover and maneuver at high speed while the four were returning to the Kushner's Pittsfield residence. Hours later, as the three girls enjoyed a ritual teenage slumber party, they spotted a peculiar light shimmering through the closed curtains of Susan's bedroom.

"Without warning, the drapes parted of their own volition and a small triangular object hovering a few feet from the house began beaming brilliant light into the bedroom. When the triangle moved to another window, the curtains repeated their opening act and the intensity of light emanating from the object increased. At this point, the girls became quite frightened and decided to retreat. 'It' had different ideas.

"All three girls found themselves unable to move or cry out. Sheer terror escalated to fervent prayers for help. After what seemed like an eternity, the siege ended. Although their freedom of movement was restored, a weird dizzy sensation haunted the girls for an hour. The girls awoke Mrs. Kushner and tearfully described the party crasher and their fear that 'it' might return. Mother eventually got the trio settled down and after much discussion decided that it would be for the best if everyone simply forgot an incident that nobody would believe anyway. All agreed.

"Things were back to normal when shortly after the dinner hour on Saturday, exactly one week following the horrific pajama party, two men arrived at the Kushner household. They identified themselves as military investigators and flashed what appeared to be United States Air Force identification. Both men wore tan trench-coats which they kept buttoned from knee to collar. The taller of the two, who, according to the family's testimony, did all the talking, was described as having blond hair, green eyes, was thin and deeply tanned. The other gentleman was heavyset with

dark hair, piercing blue eyes and was also deeply tanned.



During one sighting in Pennsylvania, a triangular-shaped object hovered over a house and projected a beam of brilliant light into one family's bedroom.

"Mrs. Kushner explained that both men wanted every shred of information regarding the UFO that the girls claimed had intimidated them. Neither parent can explain to this day why they allowed their children to be so intensely grilled by these 'government agents.' These characters moved about the house with apparently total knowledge of the whereabouts of rooms, furniture, objects, et cetera. When asked how the Air Force learned of the UFO sightings, the taller one responded with, 'We know a lot of things, a lot of things.'

"Although compelled to accept the situation, the family felt that something seemed off-center, something that, for whatever reason, they couldn't quite put their finger on until after the

officers departed. Sue noted that their clothes looked as if they had purchased them in a clothing store ten minutes before and even the bottom of their shoes seemed unwalked on in appearance. The cigarette pack held by the taller one was unopened (and stayed that way) and even his wallet was brand new.

"While the taller of the two showed his captive audience a loose-leaf notebook with professionally printed schematic diagrams and photos of both the exterior and interior views of various types of UFO-type craft, Sue watched the shorter officer secretly write in an elongated notebook not unlike those used by stenographers. Catching him off guard, she was amazed to see him writing strange symbols in vertical columns, starting from the left, going down one column, up the next, down the third, up the fourth, et cetera. Being accustomed to standard shorthand, Sue had no idea of the graphic's origin.

"Meanwhile, the talkative officer continued to mystify his audience, telling them that UFOs were nothing more than secret U.S. experimental devices which have never harmed persons or property and that public disclosure of seeing one up close could result in criminal prosecution. When Tanya asked how the family could get in touch with them should there be another sighting, the officer replied, 'I can find you anywhere, any time.'

"When these military men finally left, they backed their vehicle out onto the roadway, extinguished the headlights and zoomed off into the night. It is against Pennsylvania commonwealth traffic laws, and all common sense and safety, to drive after sunset without suitable lighting. These gentlemen probably had no connection with the United States Air Force.

"Men in Black are neither hallucinations nor hoaxes. But what do these visitations represent? Role-playing covert government operatives? Non-humans acting human? Maybe a little of both.

Maybe something beyond our comprehension. Odd appearance and bizarre behavior does not certify the existence of nonhumans among us. However, dissolving coins and cars raise interesting questions. Our failure to understand these events in no way negates their validity.

"These visitations represent entity contact at its most accessible in that entire families have endured grueling visits by these mystery men and many witnesses are harassed more than once. These visitations represent entity contact at its most elusive. Parents wonder why they allowed their children to be so intensely grilled by these strangers. Victims speak of being unable to think or react normally until after the mysterious visitors leave. To some, this suggests altered states of consciousness or subliminal hypnotic techniques. What if the MIB visit you? Will you be witty and clever and insist they pose for a snapshot? Or will you be a deer in headlights and spend your tomorrows wondering why?"

Parents wonder why they allowed their children to be so intensely grilled by these strangers. Victims speak of being unable to think or react normally until after the mysterious visitors leave.

Peter Beckman is, to put it mildly, an intriguing character. Having grown up in northern California, as a youngster, he gravitated toward the arts and acting and was soon involved with local theater and production companies.

In his early twenties, Peter attended the California Institute of the Arts, where he studied screenwriting alongside Alexander Mackendrick of The Man in the White Suit fame. His movie appearances include Chud II, Orson Welles's unfinished The Other Side of the Wind, and Echo Park.

Beckman is the voice of General Wolf in the SyFy Channel's series Monster; he worked as a voice artist on Street Fighter 4 and 5, Dissidia, the Final Fantasy, and many other video games; and he is the author of a highly entertaining paranormal-themed novel, Dead Hollywood.

In addition, Beckman is the male voice in Josie Cotton's recordings of Beyond the Valley of the Dolls and Faster Pussycat, Kill! Kill! Also, if, like me, you're a big fan of the Ramones, you'll be interested to know that Peter had a starring role in the video for the band's 1983 single "Psycho Therapy," in which he receives a kicking in the head courtesy of a psychotic punk rocker!

Peter also had a deeply weird run-in with the MIB, a story he shared after he heard me on Coast to Coast with George Noory in 2011 talking about my book The Real Men in Black. In Peter's words: "I'm pretty much a regular listener to Coast to Coast and the night you were on I happened to be tuning in. I have always been fascinated by the MIB legend; I had read about Albert Bender. But I had never really connected it with the experience I had back in 1969 or 1970—when I would have been about 20 or 21—until you described a sequential series of events that are common, and you practically described what happened to me.

"There was a friend with me at the time, Stephen Leeson, and we had taken mescaline at like 1:00 or 2:00 P.M. in the afternoon. Carmichael, California, is where I lived, a small town northeast of Sacramento. Our house was on a private road, off the main drag in Carmichael, which was Fair Oaks Boulevard. This was my parents'

house, but they were gone for a few days, so we pretty much had the place to ourselves.

"By about 9:00 or 10:00 P.M. the mescaline had pretty much worn off. We had a joint or two in the living room, but not much more than that. The living room was an A-frame, fourteen feet tall in the center. It had huge picture windows, front and aft. You could see the road through the front window.

"We were big movie fans and great fans of Roman Polanski's movies. We loved The Fearless Vampire Hunters, Rosemary's Baby. Stephen had a brother that was, I think, program director at one of the TV channels and they had 16mm prints in their library, like Repulsion and Cul-de-sac. So, Stephen would bring them over to watch. We used to go to the drive-in movies in Steve's 1956 Cadillac hearse!

"This night we were listening to the soundtrack to Rosemary's Baby by Krzysztof Komeda. As one of the tracks ended, I noticed a kind of change in the air, a shift, a weird shift. It was a change in the mood of the place. And then the black mass track came on. Then things really changed. It seemed to me like we were in my living room, but also some place else.

"In the southwest corner of the room was a dining table, which was overhung by a large lamp, on a chain, about nine or ten feet off the ground. We both saw the lamp change into a large, black-hooded figure. There were, it seemed to me, two or three of them, and the other two were standing a few feet in back of the main one. And we were like locked in place, staring at them. I don't remember seeing any eyes or anything. Then suddenly nothing; they were gone.

"We looked at each other and it was like: What the fuck was that? It was incredible. I first put it all down to hallucination, but

then I heard you on the show and I thought: well, maybe, it wasn't a hallucination. I'd taken LSD and been around the psychedelic scene in San Francisco, and pretty much knew the difference between reality and being under the influence of LSD. By this time, the album had ended.

"Now, no one ever comes up that road, hardly ever unless you lived there or were a guest or a friend and especially at that time of morning. We were more than surprised to see bright lights coming up the road and shining through the Monterey pine at the edge of the property. They were so bright they were almost like theatrical lights. I thought it was one of our neighbors, but all of a sudden the lights went off.

Taking psychedelics such as LSD and mescaline might, honestly, have had something to do with what two friends saw one day in Carmichael, California, while listening to music from Rosemary's Baby.

"We could make out the car, and it was long, like a stretch, black limo. Then a door opened and shut. I don't know how long

we waited, but we waited for a while for a knock at the front door, but it never came. Several minutes—maybe 5 or 6—the limo, or whatever it was, proceeded around the road.

"I remember asking Steve to go to the west side of the house, which was my father's painting studio, to watch it go by. I went to my bedroom, in the east end of the house to look out the window. Steve never saw anything go by, and I never saw anything go by. We had also lost some time: the Sun was coming up. All through this time I couldn't see my dog, a poodle, and finally found him under my bed, which he had never done before.

They came in and sat on the couch. They were pale and sickly; their clothes hung real loose and they looked as though they might expire at any moment.

"Now, as you continued talking with George [Noory], a memory came back. At least, it feels like a memory, part of which has come back. There was a knock at the door. I remember the knock at the front door. I don't recall if it was me or Steve who said: 'Better let them in.' I opened it; we admitted two men into the house. After what we had just seen, in retrospect this seems amazing.

"They were pretty much as you described on Coast to Coast: they were dressed in square, Eisenhower-era cop-clothing, or FBI clothing—which in 1969, 1970 was not that unusual. They came in and sat on the couch. They were pale and sickly; their clothes hung real loose and they looked as though they might expire at any moment. They appeared to have either trouble breathing, or

trouble even being. I don't believe they said a thing. If they did, it has disappeared from memory. Very odd, indeed.

"I recall that, as I was waiting for them to speak, my mind was racing; should I try humor or invective? My general impression is that they were kind of confused, but just ever so slightly amused by the situation. It was as though they were waiting for us to speak. Their physical attitudes seemed to be waiting for some sort of answer, although no questions were asked. We were all waiting.

"This frightened me for an instant; then the whole scene felt absurd and humorous. After a couple of minutes, I started feeling funny about this, and I started saying something like: 'Can we see some ID? Did someone send you? What are you really here for?' But this did not affect them at all. When I thought: 'I want them to leave,' they seemed to pick up on this, and did leave. This had to have been between the time when we first saw the lights and looked for them when the car left.

"It is important to remember that our private road went around our acre in a square-shape; once the limo pulled up front, there was literally no way for it to turn around; it had to follow the road in order to leave, but Steve and I never saw it do so, and we looked! Now it seems to me that the reason we didn't see it is that the MIB episode was blocked from our minds immediately after it had occurred, so that all we saw was the limo stop, the door open and close, the limo proceeding along the road. Then we spread out to look for it, not realizing we had lost time (the meeting with the MIB).

"For years, that part of it was locked away. But listening to the show brought it out. In all the time I took psychedelics, which is probably around 150 times, this is the only time I have had an experience like that."

The author/coauthor of 181 books, the late Brad Steiger wrote the paperback bestseller about UFOs, Strangers from the Skies, in 1966. His edited work Project Bluebook was hailed by Omni magazine as one of the best UFO books of the century. In 1987, Steiger was inducted into the Hypnosis Hall of Fame for his work with UFO contactees, abductees, and past-life regression. In Minneapolis, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award at the National UFO and Unexplained Phenomena Conference in 1996.

For many decades, together with his wife, Sherry, herself the author/coauthor of forty-five books and the publicist for Dr. J. Allen Hynek's UFO research group in Phoenix, Brad researched and investigated UFOs and their cultural impact throughout world history. The Steigers lectured and conducted seminars on the phenomenon throughout the United States and overseas.

The late paranormal researcher and prolific author Brad Steiger theorized

that the Men in Black started as a human pursuit of the paranormal that attracted the interest of "Others," who co-opted their pursuit.

The Steigers were featured in twentytwo episodes of the television series Could It Be a Miracle? Together, their television appearances and specials included The Joan Rivers Show, Entertainment Tonight, Inside Edition, Hard Copy, Hollywood Insider, and specials on HBO, the USA Network, the Learning Channel, the History Channel, and Arts and Entertainment (A&E), among others. Brad Steiger was also someone who knew far more than a bit about the Men in Black, as you will now see:

"After more than fifty years of research in the UFO and paranormal fields, I have come to the conclusion that many of the mysteries that bedevil us are products of a reflexive phenomenon. This reflexive action does not usually occur in the more mundane pursuits of architecture, industry, mining, agriculture and the like, but once one begins actively to pursue ufology or psychical research, one runs the risk of entering a surreal world in which the usual physical laws do not apply. In the case of the mythos of the Men in Black, I suggest that that eerie enigma may have begun with the machinations of a human agency assigned to investigate the actions of the more high profile investigators of the phenomenon and the more convincing witness of UFO activity with the goals of learning more about the growing interest in a worldwide phenomenon.

"Somehow along the way, this activity of the human surveillance of other humans caught the interest of a nonhuman, paraphysical agency that has for centuries pursued goals that remain elusive, even sinister, to the individuals whom they visit. Whether motivated by a bizarre sense of humor, an essentially malicious nature, or a desire to learn how much some humans

know about their eternal secrets, the Others began knocking on the doors of those who had witnessed or who had investigated UFO activity. Some of my experiences with the MIB seem most certainly the product of human surveillance that in most instances was conducted with awkward fallibility."

"Once in the golden era of MIB activity in the late 1960s while speaking to a fellow researcher on the telephone, our conversation was interrupted by a metallic-sounding voice chanting: 'Ho, ho, UFO!' Because it seemed that this got a rise out of us, this merry chant was repeated on a number of telephone calls with other investigators.

"A friend who had been doing a great deal of research on my behalf told of the time when he was anticipating a visit from me. He picked up the telephone to make a call on his private line, only to hear the following bit of conversation:

"'Has Steiger arrived in town yet?'

"'Not yet.'

"'What motel will he be staying in?'

"'The [correct name of the motel in which I had made reservations].'

"'Don't worry. Everything is set.'

"At this point my friend broke in and asked who the hell was on his private line. There was a stunned silence, a click, then the steady buzzing that indicates a clear line."

"I had my own experience with the awkward telephone spies when I checked into a hotel and found that the bellman had missed one of my suitcases—the most important one with the slides for my lecture.

"I picked up the receiver to hear a man's voice inquire: 'When

is he supposed to check in?'

"'He is already in his room,' I said in reply, though I knew the query wasn't asked of me.

"'Oh, shit!' was the profound response, followed by two rapid hang-ups.

"Other experiences with the MIB are not so easy to place in either the Human or Non-Human category.

"A friend of mine was traveling in England before starting on an around-the-world junket with a layover in Vietnam to visit his son in the armed forces. He was walking near a railway station in London when he noticed three men dressed completely in black staring at him. When my friend returned their collective stare, they approached him and asked him which train they should take for such-and-such a city. My friend calmly pointed out that he was a tourist, and it made a good deal more sense for them to ask at the information booth just a few feet away.

When he got to his room, an uncomfortable sensation prickled the back of his neck and he glanced out his window. On the street corner, looking up at his room, were the three men.

"My friend turned on his heel and walked away from the odd trio, but a glance over his shoulder told him that they were still standing there staring at him, unmindful of checking with the information booth. Suddenly ill at ease, my friend hailed a taxi and went directly to his hotel. When he got to his room, an uncomfortable sensation prickled the back of his neck and he

glanced out his window. On the street corner, looking up at his room, were the three men. Baffled, he tried to push the incident from his mind.

"A day or so later, though, he was confronted by one of the men who told him straight out: 'You are a friend of Brad Steiger. Tell him we shall visit him by Christmas.' My friend had only a peripheral knowledge of the UFO can of worms, but he returned to his hotel room and wrote me a long letter with the above details. Not long after I had received his letter, I visited a friend in another city and told him about the bizarre experience my correspondent had encountered in London. 'Humph!' Jim snorted over the lunch we were sharing. 'If those monkeys come to see you this Christmas, send 'em down to talk to me. I'd love to get one of those characters in my hands. I would solve this man-in-black mystery you've been telling me about!'

"I laughed and warned him that he had better be careful or he might get his wish. I had not returned from my trip by more than a few minutes when the telephone rang. It was Jim calling. Wondering if I might have left something at his place of business, I was informed that I had indeed left a most peculiar something behind me.

"Jim told me that I had no sooner started my homeward journey than he was told that a gentleman wished to see him. A secretary ushered a man of average height into Jim's office. But my friend said that his visitor was the thinnest human being he had ever seen.

"'He was cadaverous, Brad,' Jim told me. 'He looked like those World War II photographs of someone in a concentration camp. But he seemed alert enough, and so involved in his quest that he ignored my proffered hand of greeting. In fact, I tried to push shaking his hand, but he refused to touch me. 'I hear you

want to be the head of UFOs in Iowa,' he said quickly.

"'He took out a wallet, flipped it open, then shut, before I could see any identification. I can't really recall anything else he said, because it was all so damned nonsensical. Soon he was gone, and I was still sitting there dumbfounded.

"'I jumped to my feet, though, when I heard his car starting. I got a good look at his automobile and I wrote down its license number. I can't tell you what make of car it was. It looked like a combination of three or four different makes and models, but it didn't really look like anything I had ever seen before. And the license number didn't check. The Highway Patrol said there was no such Iowa plate registered. A friend in another branch of state government, who owed me a favor, said the plate wasn't registered to any government agency, either.'

"The cases above are baffling, but in those cases I suspect a human agency involved in a strange campaign that was conducted regarding Steiger imposters who spoke at various conferences around the United States. On occasions the imposters allegedly conducted themselves very well, thus making the whole enterprise of Counterfeit Steigers a seemingly futile project. On other occasions, the imposter's assignment was quite obviously to taint my reputation."

MOCA VAMPIRE

Since 1995, Puerto Rico has been the domain of a deadly and allegedly bloodsucking creature that has infamously become known as the chupacabra. As we have seen, strong evidence suggests that chupacabras are alien creatures. However, an even more intriguing aspect tops this controversy: Long before the now legendary beast was on anyone's radar, another vampire-like monster was roaming around on the island. It was known as the Moca Vampire—its name taken from the municipality of Moca, which can be found in the northwest of the island and is home to around forty thousand people. Unlike the chupacabra—sightings of which continue to this very day—the "Vampiro de Moca," as it was referred to on Puerto Rico, was a monster of a definitively "here one minute and gone the next" kind.

The controversy all began in late February 1975. That was

when the population of Moca was plunged into a collective state of fear—and it was hardly surprising. Numerous ranchers reported how their farm animals were being violently slaughtered under cover of darkness and systematically drained of massive amounts of blood. The first area targeted was the Barrio Rocha region, where several goats, at least four pigs, numerous chickens, and more than a dozen cows were all found dead with puncture marks on their bodies and deep, clawlike wounds on their skin, all missing one vital ingredient: blood.

Villagers and farmers were as outraged as they were terrified. Local authorities, chiefly the police, tried to diffuse the controversy by attributing the attacks to nothing stranger than the work of packs of wild dogs—a theory that, almost inevitably, was received with nothing but scorn, skepticism, and disdain.

By the end of the first week in March 1975, the death count was close to three dozen. It was in this same week that an important development was made: the blood-sucking culprit was finally seen up close and personal, so to speak. The witness was a woman named Maria Acevedo, who caught sight of a monstrously sized, screaming and screeching, winged beast that landed atop her home and clambered about her zinc roof, making an almighty racket in the process.

It was clearly no normal bird: around four to five feet in height, it was described as similar in appearance to a pterodactyl, a presumed-extinct, flying reptile of the Jurassic era. Whatever the true nature of the monster, it quickly took to the skies and vanished into the starry darkness.

Less than forty-eight hours later, a farmer named Cecilio Hernandez contacted the police after more than thirty of his chickens were killed in a fashion that was quickly becoming attributed to the predations of the Moca Vampire. It was at the

same time that Hernandez's story was widely being reported in Puerto Rico that a potential answer to the puzzle was uncovered: two huge snakes were killed in Moca just before they were about to attack a cow belonging to a rancher named Luis Torres.

The Moca Vampire from Puerto Rico is a livestock-slaughtering beast that has been described as resembling a prehistoric pterodactyl.

Of course, this didn't explain the winged monster that Maria Acevedo reported only days earlier, and it didn't resolve the many and varied additional killings that continued to plague the people of Moca. In addition, while snakes will typically take down and devour—whole, no less—significantly sized animals, they will not, and cannot, suck blood in either small or large proportions. In other words, while the snake theory might have been a small component of the saga, it most certainly didn't explain everything.

On March 18, 1975, the monster struck again. On this occasion, the victims were a pair of goats owned by Hector Vega of

Moca's Barrio Pueblo. Once again, the culprit had struck in its typical fashion of draining the goats of their blood—in this case, of all their blood. The creature was not done with Vega, however. On the following night, no fewer than seventeen animals were attacked, of which ten were killed due to deep, penetrating wounds, trauma, and massive blood loss.

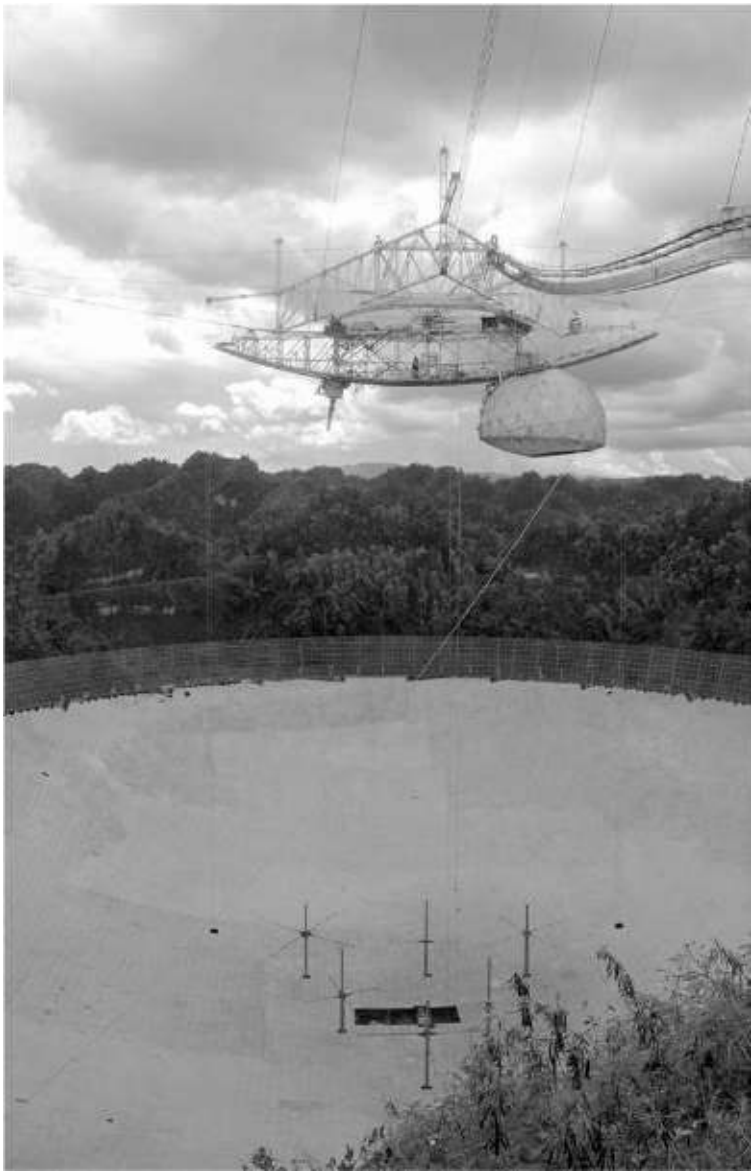
Five days later, a pig was found dead by farmer Felix Badillo. Blood was removed in significant amounts, and a hole was discovered in the head of the animal, which gave every appearance of something powerful being violently thrust into its skull. On top of that, one of the pig's ears was missing in a fashion that, rather intriguingly, was attributed to a surgical procedure. No wonder the people of Moca were as puzzled as they were alarmed.

Forty-eight hours later came the most astonishing development: Juan Muniz was attacked by a huge, birdlike animal that swooped down upon him from above as he walked through Barrio Pulido. He struggled and fought as the winged nightmare did its very best to force Muniz to the ground. In his panicked state, Muniz managed to escape and alert the authorities.

Then, as April began, the Moca Vampire began to expand its hunting ground: reported all across the island were attacks of farm animals again allegedly drained of blood, rumors of attacks on people, and even a police cover-up of the facts to prevent a public panic from exploding. The attacks continued into May—then into June, too. By this time, hundreds of animals were said to have fallen victim to the blood-drinking monster with barely an answer to the problem in sight. As it transpired, however, matters came to a sudden, inexplicable halt. Shortly before the end of June, the sightings, encounters, and attacks were no more. Whatever the true nature of the Moca Vampire, it vanished as quickly as it originally surfaced.

Now we get to the alien connection.

Shortly before the dawning of the 1960s, a historic document with the title of “Searching for Interstellar Communications” was prepared by Phillip Morrison and Giuseppe Conconi, a pair of physicists at Cornell University, which was published within the prestigious pages of Nature. Its focus: the potential feasibility of seeking out alien life via high-powered microwaves. It was a paper that received a great deal of interest, particularly so from a man named Frank Drake, who chose to turn the theories of Morrison and Conconi into reality at the Green Bank National Radio Astronomy Observatory in West Virginia. In October 1961, a conference of what became known as the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) was held at Green Bank, and Drake proved to be the standout character when he revealed to the audience what has famously become known as the Drake Equation —a theoretical means to try to determine the number of intelligent, alien cultures that might exist in the known universe.



An unlikely place for a paranormal encounter is Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico, where a guard reported what he believed to be a vampiric creature.

When Frank Drake chose to focus his work on a quest for extraterrestrial life, it was a decision that ultimately took him to none other than Puerto Rico and its now famous Arecibo Radio Telescope, located at the National Astronomy and Ionosphere Center, of which Drake ultimately rose to the rank of director. All of this brings us to a story that may well be connected to the

mysterious alien known as the Moca Vampire.

Midway through the 1960s, something decidedly strange happened at the telescope, something that may well have had a direct bearing upon the chupacabra phenomenon. A guard reported one day of seeing a curious character roaming around the edge of the installation. What made the man—if a man it was—so curious was his attire: a long, black cloak. The guard, apparently, had his own ideas on what he was seeing: one of the undead; a vampire. A report on the affair was prepared for Drake's attention. That was far from being the end of the matter, however.

Forty-eight hours after the sighting, Drake said: "I really was forced to look into it … because a cow was found dead on a nearby farm, with all the blood drained from its body. The vampire rumor had already spread through the observatory staff, and now the cow incident whipped the fears of many people into a frenzy." This 1960s-era case (which Drake described in his 1992 book Is Anyone Out There?) is important because it demonstrates that rumors of blood-draining vampires in Puerto Rico predated the chupacabra explosion of the 1990s by decades. In other words, the people of the island were—years earlier—primed to associate local, mysterious killings of animals with significant blood loss, and when the chupacabra came along, they, too, got caught up in the mix.

MR. JANUS

One of the strangest stories of the Women in Black comes from a man named Brian Kinnersley. In the 1940s and 1950s, Kinnersley's grandfather worked for the United Kingdom's domestic intelligence-gathering agency MI5, which is the British equivalent of the FBI. In 1955, Kinnersley's grandfather was involved in a highly sensitive, top-secret investigation of a man who claimed contact with a very human-looking alien in the previous year, 1954. The reason why the affair was considered so secret and sensitive was simple yet also fantastic and more than a little worrying. The man in question was a leading figure in the British military. He also, at one point during the Cold War, had his finger poised to push the dreaded "red button" had the United Kingdom gone to war with the Soviets. His name was Air Marshal Sir Beresford Peter Torrington Horsley.

Born in 1921, Horsley embarked upon an illustrious career with the British military in 1939 when he took a position as deck boy on the USS Cyclops, a steamer bound for Malaya. For the return journey, as the Second World War was declared, he changed ships—to the USS Menelaus—and eventually gravitated to a career in the Royal Air Force first as an air gunner, then as a pilot, and subsequently as a flight instructor. Horsley was later attached to the Communications Squadron of the 2nd Tactical Air Force in France, and during the D-Day invasion of Normandy, he accepted the job of personal pilot to Major General Sir Miles Graham. He returned to England in 1947, joined the staff of the Central Flying School, 23 Training Group, and was appointed adjutant to the Oxford University Air Squadron in 1948.

In July 1949, Horsley entered the Royal Household as a squadron leader and as equerry to Her Royal Highness, the Princess Elizabeth, Duchess of Edinburgh (better known today as Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II) and to His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh. In 1952, Horsley became a wing commander and, in 1953, became a full-time equerry to the Duke of Edinburgh; it was a role he held until 1956.

Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, had a fascination with UFOs, according to Horsley, and wanted Horsley to conduct a study about them.

From the latter part of the 1950s to the early 1960s, Horsley was employed as senior instructor at the RAF Flying College, Manby, Lincolnshire; as commanding officer at RAF Wattisham, Suffolk; and as group captain of the Near East Air Force (NEAF), operations, on the island of Cyprus. Horsley made the rank of air vice-marshal, later attaining the position of assistant chief of air staff (operations) and then that of commanding officer, 1-group from 1971 to 1973. His final post in the Royal Air Force was as the deputy commander-in-chief of strike command, which he held from 1973 to 1975.

Horsley's other claim to fame is that in late 1954 he had a face-to-face encounter with a human-looking alien who went by the memorable and mysterious name of Mr. Janus.

The very strange affair began when Horsley learned of the Duke of Edinburgh's fascination with the complexities of the UFO puzzle. According to Horsley: "[The Duke] was quite interested. As always, his mind was open. He agreed I should do a study on the subject in my spare time; as long as I kept it in perspective and didn't bring the Palace into disrepute. He didn't want to see headlines about him believing in little green men."

With typical British understatement, Horsley said: "At the end of my tour at the Palace, I had a very strange experience." To say the least!

Sir Arthur Barratt, who worked at Buckingham Palace as gentleman usher to the sword of state, introduced Horsley to a certain General Martin, who, in turn, put him in touch with a mysterious Mrs. Markham. Interestingly, the English researchers Dr. David Clarke and Andy Roberts learned from Horsley that General Martin "believed UFOs were visitors from an alien civilization which wanted to warn us of the dangers posed by atomic war." According to Horsley, it was Mrs. Markham who told him—in an earlier meeting, which will be described shortly—to turn up at a particular apartment in London's Chelsea district on a specific evening, where he would meet a stranger: the aforementioned Mr. Janus.

Right up until his death in 2001, Horsley's position on the overwhelmingly weird experience was rock solid: "I don't care what people think—it was what happened."

Allegedly, the apartment—on Smith Street—was the home of Mrs. Markham, although, as we'll see, solid reasons exist to believe that Mrs. Markham had far stranger origins and dwellings than London, England. Nevertheless, she reportedly sat in on the conversation between Horsley and Mr. Janus—albeit without uttering even a single, solitary word.

Horsley said of his chat with the man that "Janus was there, sitting by the fire in a deep chair. He asked: 'What is your interest in flying saucers?' We talked for hours about traveling in space and time. I don't know what or who he was. He didn't say he was a visitor from another planet but I had that impression. I believe he was here to observe us. I never saw him again. I have no qualms about the reaction to my experience with Mr. Janus."

Rather disturbingly, echoing the claims of so many of the contactees that the Space Brothers were concerned by our ever-growing nuclear arsenals, UFO investigator Timothy Good says: "In my second and last meeting with Sir Peter Horsley at his home in 2000, he revealed that, in addition to being disturbed by the realization that Janus was reading his mind, he was even more disturbed by the fact that this extraordinary man 'knew all Britain's top-secret nuclear secrets.'"

In light of what Mr. Janus knew, is it possible that this bizarre episode was actually part of some state-sponsored operation designed to ascertain the nature of Sir Peter's character and his

loyalty to the country? This particularly novel and thought-provoking theory was most assuredly on the minds of researchers Clarke and Roberts, who asked Horsley if he considered it feasible that he had been "set up" by MI5 to "test his vulnerability."

Horsley provided the pair with an adamant "no."

Right up until his death in 2001, Horsley's position on the overwhelmingly weird experience was rock solid: "I don't care what people think—it was what happened. I would say they come from another planet somewhere in the universe but not in our galaxy. They are benign, not aggressive and, like us, are explorers."

All of this brings us back to Brian Kinnersley, who says that, in 1955, an MI5 investigation of Sir Peter Horsley's claims began. It was a small-scale operation comprised of just Kinnersley's grandfather and three other individuals. It lasted for, at most, two or three weeks. According to Kinnersley, various scenarios were looked at, such as the possibility that this was some sort of alternative and ingenious Soviet ruse to try to uncover British defense secrets of an atomic nature. The idea that it may have been an American rather than a Russian operation was also addressed. Despite intensive digging, nothing solid—or even vague—surfaced that might have suggested that Mr. Janus was not an alien but rather a player with one of the superpowers instead, who was using a UFO-themed cover to try to secure British state secrets. This led MI5 to then consider the most incredible scenario possible: that Mr. Janus was, indeed, an extraterrestrial visitor after all, one who was deeply concerned by the possibility that the human race was on the verge of exterminating itself.

Brian Kinnersley's grandfather had extensive meetings with Sir Peter, during which the latter related something very intriguing. It focused on the aforementioned "Mrs. Markham," described by Horsley himself as "enigmatic" and who was responsible for arranging the historic meeting between Horsley and Janus. Horsley apparently had a very good reason for describing the mysterious woman as an enigma. According to MI5's records, Horsley stated that he had his deep suspicions that Mrs. Markham was a human-looking alien, too. Based on what is about to be revealed, you may very well agree.

Late one February 1955 evening, in the confines of a plush, elite club near Whitehall, London, Horsley described—to Kinnersley's grandfather—the process by which he came to encounter Mrs. Markham. It went like this: Sir Arthur Barratt, a gentleman usher to the sword of state at Buckingham Palace, knew of the Duke of Edinburgh's interest in flying saucers, so when he learned that the duke had urged Horsley to quietly investigate the UFO controversy, Barratt referred Horsley to an American Air Force general whose last name was Martin. Barratt, apparently, had come to know Martin in 1953 and learned that he worked in the United Kingdom with a NATO contingent at a military base in Suffolk, England. Horsley stressed that nothing was even remotely alien about General Martin, but that could most definitely not be said about Mrs. Markham—not at all.

Thames House in London, England, houses MI5, the British version of the FBI. Both developed an interest in the possibility of alien visitors to our world.

MI5 continued to put the pieces of the puzzle together.

Brian Kinnersley was told by his grandfather that General Martin claimed to know something astonishing and not a little disturbing. In fact, it was highly disturbing. The general quietly informed Sir Peter, as they sat in the latter's home and sipped fine brandy, that nothing less than a race of extremely human-looking aliens was among us—in most of the leading nations on the planet, no less. It was a case of outright alien infiltration, said General Martin, who added that, within the Pentagon, people were undecided as to whether this was a benevolent infiltration or something that was soon destined to mutate into something very dark. It was clear to Martin's sources that the aliens were

particularly concerned by our atomic arsenals, but whether that concern was for us or for the planet itself—which some Pentagon higher-ups suspected that the E.T.s might want to claim as their own—was a matter of deep and, occasionally, furious debate. All of this brings us to Mrs. Markham.

Sir Peter listened, surely entranced and not a little concerned, as General Martin informed him that via an intermediary, he—Horsley—could have a face-to-face encounter with an alien—which, as we have seen, turned out to be the curiously named Mr. Janus. That intermediary was Mrs. Markham, who Horsley met shortly before the meeting with Janus. The general advised Sir Peter to expect a visit from Mrs. Markham and that he should be prepared, and should steady himself, for something profound. That was an understatement of epic proportions. According to Horsley, General Martin appeared to greatly fear Mrs. Markham, which, he said, was provoked by her "not quite looking properly human," as Brian Kinnersley tantalizingly worded it.

Having gotten the lowdown on the Janus–Horsley debate, MI5 then backtracked and got into the matter of Mrs. Markham.

At around 8:00 P.M.—the night before Sir Peter Horsley had his encounter with Mr. Janus—a loud knock came at the door. She had arrived. Sir Peter was confronted by a woman dressed in a long, black, thick coat and wearing black heels. Her black hair was worn long and straight, and her skin was like that of someone in an anemic state—vampirelike might have been a far better description, or, perhaps, Vampira meets Elvira. Horsley said he felt decidedly ill at ease in the company of the woman who stood

before him, who introduced herself only as Mrs. Markham and had an unsettling, emotion-free appearance and voice. “Monotone” was how her words were described. Despite immediately developing a distinct sense that Mrs. Markham was not someone to cross paths with and likely not even human, Sir Peter invited her in. She simply nodded and strode right past him, proceeding to look around the rooms of Horsley’s abode. The slightly shocked Sir Peter did nothing but follow her, unsure of what her curious behavior meant. He was even more shocked when she invited him to take a seat!

Horsley told MI5 that just like Mr. Janus, Mrs. Markham did not explicitly state that she was from another world—ever—but her words made it clear to him that, at the very least, she was in contact with such beings and could arrange a meeting with them. Despite the disturbing, unearthly atmosphere that the presence of Mrs. Markham provoked, Sir Peter kept his calm. The unblinking, unsmiling, pale beauty before him warned that Earth was in grave danger—the reason being the threat posed by the growing atomic arsenals of NATO and the Soviet Union, of course. He, Horsley was told, could significantly aid in lessening tensions between the superpowers provided that he was willing to come onboard with a group of extraterrestrials who wished to see Earth completely disarmed of its atomic technology.

Despite the disturbing, unearthly atmosphere that the presence of Mrs. Markham provoked, Sir Peter kept his calm.

Hardly surprisingly, Sir Peter was highly suspicious of all this,

fearing that if disarmament occurred on both sides, it would then leave everyone on Earth vulnerable and wide open to attack from something potentially far worse than the Soviets—and he said so out loud. Mrs. Markham, in return, offered no reply beyond that of a slight, wry smile—her only smile in the entire meeting, which may tell us more than a bit about the woman's motivations. Nevertheless, Horsley said he would be willing to meet with Mrs. Markham's sources—namely, the aliens, and so it was that four or five days later, Sir Peter Horsley had his now infamous head-to-head with Mr. Janus—thanks to Mrs. Markham, who provided Horsley with the Chelsea, London, address at which he could find Mr. Janus on the night in question.

With the conversation over, Mrs. Markham simply nodded, stood up, and exited Horsley's home—vanishing into the English darkness, not unlike some sinister specter in an old, black-and-white Bela Lugosi movie. Rather intriguingly, according to Horsley, after he retired to bed that same night, he was woken in the early hours by an ear-splitting wailing in the tones of what was clearly a woman. In a cold sweat, Horsley froze until the wailing came to a sudden end after around fifteen or twenty seconds. One could make a good case that what Horsley experienced was the cry of a banshee: a wild, black-haired, Irish she-spirit that often delivers messages of looming death and misfortune. Might Mrs. Markham have been just such a thing? In light of her appearance, one suspects that that particular theory may well have crossed Sir Peter's mind as he lay there in bed filled with nothing but stone-cold fear.

Horsley would see Mrs. Markham one more time, as we have seen, when Horsley, Markham, and Janus were all together in that darkly lit London apartment.

As an appropriately odd postscript, Janus was never to be

seen again. General Martin became "distant and evasive." As for Mrs. Markham, she was nowhere to be seen. When Sir Peter decided to make a follow-up visit to what was said to have been Mrs. Markham's apartment, no one was home. According to the neighbors, the woman who lived there had "left in a hurry."

Brian Kinnersley's grandfather revealed to his colleagues at MI5 precisely what Horsley had told him—about both Mrs. Markham and Mr. Janus. Despite a bit of good-natured ribbing, one of Kinnersley's coworkers on the project observed that Mrs. Markham sounded incredibly like the lead character in a movie that had been released at cinemas in the United Kingdom in 1954—the very same year as Horsley's encounters in London. It was a movie that the man in question, a fan of sci-fi, had seen when it was released. Its title: Devil Girl from Mars—the "Devil Girl" of the title being a woman who does indeed come across astonishingly like Mrs. Markham, as we shall now see.

A black-and-white science fiction film, Devil Girl from Mars (1954) starred Patricia Laffan as the Devil Girl of the movie's title along with Hazel Court, who appeared in a number of classic Hammer Film Productions horror movies of the late 1950s and 1960s. Basically, the film tells the story of a sultry and sinister alien babe from Mars named Nyah, who spends the whole time clad in, and strutting around in, a tight-fitting black outfit, black cloak, and long, black boots. She comes to our world to seek out males to help boost the waning Martian population. As Nyah reveals to those she encounters, Mars has been decimated by war on the Red Planet between males and females: a war the women won. With the Martian men now almost gone, this makes breeding more than

a significant problem.

The plan is for Nyah to land her flying saucer in the very heart of London and announce to the people of the United Kingdom—and, soon thereafter, to the entire world—that a program of alien–human breeding is to quickly begin in earnest, like it or like it not. I can't say it sounds bad at all. Unfortunately for Nyah, things go deeply awry, and her spacecraft comes down near an old inn in the dark wildernesses of Scotland. It's an inn that is populated by just the owner, a couple of employees, and a handful of guests—and yes, as you might have quickly guessed, they become the small, heroic band that has to try to thwart Nyah's dastardly plans to enslave the entire human race—or, at least, the world's men.

Actress Patricia Laffan (shown here in the movie Quo Vadis) was in a sci-fi movie called Devil Girl from Mars in which she played the Martian named Nyah, who bears a resemblance to Aura Rhanes.

Devil Girl from Mars certainly isn't a classic of the genre, but it is entertaining and thought-provoking. Not only that, it also contains some contactee-based parallels. For example, Nyah comes across not unlike Truman Bethurum's Aura Rhanes. Nyah can speak all Earth-based languages as, reportedly, could Captain Rhanes. She warns of the perils of war and destruction as did pretty much all of the aliens that absolutely dominated 1950s-era ufology. She provides a wealth of obscure scientific data about her craft to those of the group she invites onboard, which is a curious theme present in many contactee accounts, and she is strangely and noticeably detached and even slightly ethereal—further characteristics of eerie Aura Rhanes.

On top of that is the matter of Nyah's race visiting Earth as a means to try to save the waning Martian population. Today, we hear a great deal about alien abductions, the so-called black-eyed, diminutive Greys, and the theories that they are on an evolutionary decline. The result: they come to Earth to abduct people. They then reap DNA, sperm, and eggs, which they use as part of a bizarre and nightmarish program to create a hybrid species that is part human and part E.T.

Today, we hear a great deal about alien abductions, the so-called black-eyed, diminutive Greys, and the theories that they are on an evolutionary decline.

Back in the 1950s, when Devil Girl from Mars was made, however, many people within ufology were focused on the idea that extraterrestrials were here to "save" us from the perils of atomic destruction in The Day the Earth Stood Still-style—or to

destroy us in scenarios akin to those presented in War of the Worlds and Invasion of the Body Snatchers. For the most part, the idea that interspecies crossbreeding was at the very heart of the alleged alien mission didn't surface until years later, so for that reason alone, it's interesting that Devil Girl from Mars is heavily focused around the specific angle of alien–human crossbreeds that dominates so much of alien-abduction research today.

When the clear parallels between Sir Peter Horsley's encounter with Mrs. Markham and those of Mars's black-clad "devil girl" became clear, Horsley was quite naturally questioned by MI5 to see if he had seen the movie. It was, without doubt, a logical question to ask. The movie, after all, was made in 1954, and Horsley's encounters occurred in that year, too. For his part, Sir Peter flatly denied ever seeing Devil Girl from Mars nor had he ever heard of it. He did, however—when told of the plotline of the movie—ponder on the theory that, just perhaps, the human-looking aliens in our midst that General Martin told of had also infiltrated the domain of movie making to the extent that they were now secretly shaping and manipulating our perceptions of aliens via on-screen entertainment.

Whatever the truth of this very strange affair and its cast of notable characters—the clandestine agents of MI5, the Duke of Edinburgh, Sir Peter Horsley, General Martin, Sir Arthur Barratt, and that pale-skinned, black-clad vamp who called herself Mrs. Markham—it demonstrates that the WIB have the unnerving ability to get their grips into some of the most senior and influential figures in both government and the military, including those like Sir Peter himself, a man who had official clearance to launch the nukes that could have ensured the end of human civilization. A disturbing thought, for sure.

NIGHTMARE INVADERS

One of the strangest kinds of aliens are those that can invade our dreams—as in literally. Only hours after briefly seeing a cigar-shaped UFO hovering near Stonehenge, Wiltshire, England, on December 25, 1985, Sandra Green—after driving home from a late-night Christmas Eve party in the English city of Bath—had a bizarre dream. In it, three Men in Black warned Sandra to keep her nose out of UFOs. They were—as they usually are—cadaverous, "slightly dead"-looking MIB. As for the warning, it was one of those "or else"-type threats that the MIB are so skilled at making. The dream was so graphic that it led Sandra to believe that the MIB had the ability to literally get inside her dreams, manipulate those very same dreams, and issue a bone-chilling warning—one that she has still not forgotten.

Sandra shared the story with me on the evening of September

9, 2014—the facts of the affair still firmly fixed in her mind and her memory after close to thirty years. I have to say that it wasn't just the facts that were fixed in Sandra's mind; it was cold fear, too. Even across a transatlantic telephone call, I could sense that all was not well. I messaged Sandra a few days later in an effort to clarify a couple of things she mentioned to me. She did not reply. She still hasn't. A sign of something? I hoped not.

The Hat Man is a Man in Black-type being that appears in shadowy form, not unlike the infamous Shadow People—to whom the Hat Man is almost certainly related, even if we're not sure why (see "Hat Man Horror"). On many occasions, however, the Hat Man appears in regular, human form with a black beard and a black suit, wearing a long overcoat or a cloak—always black, too. I know this, as I have investigated many such affairs. Most noticeable about this creepy figure is, of course, his hat. Sometimes, it's a fedora; other times, it's an old-style top hat. Occasionally, it's more like a cowboy hat. Regardless of the kind of headgear, it's always present and always black. Many of the encounters occur while the victim is in a distinctly altered state—that of sleeping.

Angie had just such an encounter in Leominster, Massachusetts, on September 6, 1994, as she told me late on the evening of October 8, 2014. Her reason for contacting me was because, quite out of the blue, she had suddenly begun to dream of the events of twenty years earlier—and dream of them almost every night for the last couple of weeks. Very much like those people unfortunate enough to be confronted by the somewhat similar Slenderman—the ultimate Internet meme come to life in Tulpa form—Angie was sleeping when the mysterious thing disturbed her sleep by manifesting in her bedroom and staring at her with a menacing grin on its pale, ghoulish face. For a few

moments, Angie was unable to move. As she finally broke the spell of paralysis, however, the Hat Man was gone.

I was hardly surprised when Angie added that as a result of the new dreams, she now feared a return visit from the man in the hat. I tried to stay on the positive side of things and told Angie to try to dismiss such worries from her mind, but to this day, it would not surprise me if Angie gets that second, feared encounter, as my words really did not seem to comfort her, even when we chatted again some weeks later on.

Kimberly was disturbed to see the tall, slender being in a black suit coming straight after her.

On June 22, 2016, friend and psychic Kimberly Rackley messaged me on Facebook, clearly in a state of fear and stress. She wrote:

"Had an experience last night/morning. A little drained this morning. Freaked me out. I was awoken by what seemed like thousands of voices that were excited and upset. I sometimes hear the astral plane at night but this was crazy. I need to make it stop so I lift into astral and all these entities are everywhere in agitated state.

"I ask what's wrong and they all circle me and then this being very tall and slender all in black suit but with a long coat and gray eyes comes straight for me. The entities circling me close in tighter. They are trying to protect me. But he pushes them away with flick of his hand and I'm suddenly back in my body. There in my room was the man. He had same non-aura energy, like MIB. He pointed at me and the place in my wrist where the previous MIBs always try to place a chip in me started burning. Then I passed out. I feel electric inside, like I'm going to jump out of my skin and I'm nauseated. Kind of frightened. I look like death.

"I'm freaked out now. I don't freak easily with supernatural stuff except with MIB. This one makes the ones that come in my sleep look like puppy dogs. I'm kind of nervous about channeling or going into theta today. Too close to astral. We need to find out why! I'll see if I can psychically discover anything. I'm not going to let them intimidate me."

On the same day, Kimberly expanded on this in a blog post. She wrote: "If you feel like death warmed-over then you most definitely look like death warmed-over as I discovered this

morning when I ungraciously made my way to the bathroom. You would feel and look the same if you experienced the more than unnerving events I had. Yours truly is still trembling, not quite certain if it is from the panic of the frightening encounter or the electrical jolt received.

From the time I was eight and witnessed a glowing figure slightly similar to a grey walking down the hallway of my home….

"Being a medium I am not fearful of the supernatural or unearthly, but there is one thing that has filled me with terror since I was a child and that is the MIB. I've told the story of my repetitive MIB encounters before but it suffers repeating because I believe it is significant to the most recent encounter.

"From the time I was eight and witnessed a glowing figure slightly similar to a grey walking down the hallway of my home, I have been subject to frequent MIB visits. These visits are always from the same two men, mostly in my dream state until I began realizing my abilities as a medium and then the visits would occur in meditation or altered states of consciousness. Never before this newest encounter has one been a physical encounter. The two men come to me, usually appearing through my bedroom window. My normal MIBs resemble ninjas or soldiers, always in black skin-tight clothing or fatigue uniforms, and always with the aura of intense panic. They will point at me and say, 'No, Kya, not yet.' I have no idea why they call me Kya. Is it too much to hope for that they have me confused with someone else? I also have no inkling of what 'not yet' signifies. They then pull up a holographic ball

where they show me that I will be taken away and put in this metal room, underground. The room has one single chair and surrounding me is a bluish force field. Sounds like a science fiction movie, right? Then they point at my right wrist, and a chip appears under my skin. They vanish, leaving me always in full panic mode.

"I know you are wondering about the chip. I have yet to discover its purpose but each occasion that they place the chip, I immediately remove it. Alien or dimensional implants are more common than you might imagine and can be detected when you are in the theta state. These implants have an etheric vibration which means they can be removed etherically as well. Lucky for me I am a Theta Facilitator.

"This newest encounter was much different than the above so let me get on with the story. I was awoken around 4 A.M. to a thousand voices in my head. It is quite common for me to hear the astral plane, but this was like a war going on. I know I have to stop the voices before I end up on Zany Street with men in white coats chasing me. I lift up to the astral where I find the entities in an agitated and anxious state. Curiously they are all gathered in a very close proximity to each other.

"I ask what is wrong and the entities immediately circle me. I am not afraid as I have been to the astral many times and have friends here. Suddenly, a very tall man comes from the mist. He is in a black suit and wearing a long coat. The man is whitish-gray, bald, and no facial hair, yeah not even an eyelash. I'm filled with immediate panic because I see no aura or residual of life force energy. The same non-energy I see with the MIB. However, there was an electrical charge around him which is something I always see around the MIB of my past encounters.

"The entities attempt to tighten the circle around me but the

being in black swipes them away with a flick of his hand. I fall back into my body, sit up and to my horror the being is standing in my room. He raises his arm, palm out and I am jolted with a shot of intense energy. I pass out.

"When I awaken, it all comes flooding back to me. My body feels as if I am going to jump out of my skin and I am nauseated. I realize that the astral voices may have been attempting to warn me and certainly they were trying to protect me. This indicates that whatever the MIB are, even the astral plane is aware and afraid of them.

"Could it be that my recent talk with friend and author Nick Redfern on this very subject have triggered this encounter? I believe the MIB have every account of who attempts to reveal them. I'm always left with sheer panic and more questions after an encounter with the MIB. The panic I experience however, won't stop me from seeking the truth nor will it stop me from being who I am or doing what I do."

OWLMAN OF THE WOODS

In early 1976, the dense trees surrounding Mawnan Old Church, Cornwall, England, became a veritable magnet for a diabolical beast that was christened the Owlman. The majority of those who crossed paths with the creature asserted that it was humanlike in both size and design and possessed a pair of large wings, fiery, red eyes, and claws and exuded an atmosphere of menace. No wonder people make parallels with Mothman. It all began during the weekend of Easter 1976 when two young girls, June and Vicky Melling, had an encounter of a truly nightmarish kind in Mawnan Woods. The girls were on holiday with their parents when they saw a gigantic, feathery "birdman" hovering over the thirteenth-century church.

It was a story that their father, Don Melling, angrily shared with a man named Tony "Doc" Shiels. I say "angrily" because

Shiels was a noted, local magician who Melling came to believe had somehow instigated the whole affair—or, as Shiels himself worded it, "some trick that had badly frightened his daughters." Shiels denied any involvement in the matter whatsoever, but that was only the start of things.

Another one to see the Owlman was Jane Greenwood, also a young girl. She wrote a letter to the local newspaper, the Falmouth Packet, during summer 1976 that detailed her own startling encounter: "I am on holiday in Cornwall with my sister and our mother. I, too, have seen a big bird-thing. It was Sunday morning, and the place was in the trees near Mawnan Church, above the rocky beach. It was in the trees standing like a full-grown man, but the legs bent backwards like a bird's. It saw us, and quickly jumped up and rose straight up through the trees. How could it rise up like that?"

Two fourteen-year-old girls, Sally Chapman and Barbara Perry, also had the misfortune of having a run-in with the Owlman in 1976. At around 10:00 P.M., while camping in the woods of Mawnan as they sat outside their tent making a pot of tea, the pair heard a strange, hissing noise. Upon looking around, they saw the infernal Owlman staring in their direction from a distance of about sixty feet. Sally said: "It was like a big owl with pointed ears, as big as a man. The eyes were red and glowing. At first I thought that it was someone dressed-up, playing a joke, trying to scare us. I laughed at it. We both did. Then it went up in the air and we both screamed. When it went up you could see its feet!"

Barbara added: "It's true. It was horrible, a nasty owl-face with big ears and big red eyes. It was covered in grey feathers. The claws on its feet were black. It just flew up and disappeared in the trees."

While rumors of additional sightings of the creature occurred

in the immediate years that followed, it wasn't until the summer of either 1988 or 1989 that the Owlman put in an appearance that can be documented to a significant degree. In this case, the witness was a young boy, dubbed "Gavin" by a good friend of mine, Jon Downes (who wrote an entire book on the winged monster titled The Owlman and Others), and his girlfriend at the time, Sally. The beast, Gavin told Jon, was around five feet in height and had large feet, glowing eyes, and significantly sized wings. It was a shocking, awe-inspiring encounter that Gavin and Sally never forgot.

Tony "Doc" Shiels (pictured here in 2015) is an English author, magician, and artist who was the first to report on the Owlman story in 1976.

As was the case in the immediate post-1976 era, a few reports from the 1990s and 2000s have surfaced. Chiefly, however, they are from individuals who prefer not to go on the record—which

has led to understandable suspicions of fakery and hoaxing—but one could also make a very good argument that going public about having seen a monstrous "birdman" in the English woodland would not be the wisest move to make. Today, getting ever closer to forty years since the original encounters occurred, the matter remains the undeniable controversy that it was back then. For some researchers, Doc Shiels is the man to blame. They perceive him as a trickster, a faker, and someone not to be trusted. Jon Downes, however, suggests something else—something with which I concur.

This something is namely that Shiels—dubbed the "Wizard of the Western World"—has profound knowledge of "magic." By that, I don't mean people pulling rabbits out of hats. We are talking here about something far stranger, something ancient, and something filled with swirling mystery.

In a review of Doc's excellent book Monstrum, I noted: "[Doc's] is a world filled with a deep understanding of the real nature of magic (chaos and ritualistic), the secrets of invocation and manifestation, of strange realms just beyond—and that occasionally interact with—our own, and Trickster-like phenomenon. Doc's is also a domain where, when we dare to imagine the fantastic, when we decide to seek it out, and when we finally accept its reality, we perhaps provide it with some form of quasi-existence."

Perhaps Doc, in a decidedly strange way, really did play a role in the formation of the Owlman legend, but such was the allure of the beast that it quickly stepped out of the world of imagination and storytelling and right into the heart of the real world. On that last point, be careful what you wish for, lest you unleash into our reality a monster that has no intention of returning to that domain from which it was originally created, imagined, or invoked.

However, the mysterious matter of the Owlman has another angle. It's an angle that suggests that the Owlman is nothing less than an extraterrestrial creature.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the UFO phenomenon —particularly that which focuses on the "alien-abduction" controversy—is one that makes a connection between encounters of the unearthly kind and owls. Numerous reports are on file where people who have undergone UFO experiences report sightings of anomalous owls. By "anomalous," I mean owls that (a) manifest directly before or after the encounter and in the same location and (b) seem to be much larger than the average, known kind of owl. This has led to an intriguing theory: that the sightings of owls are actually nothing of the sort. They may be nothing less than skillfully created "screen memories" that are implanted into the mind of the abductee or the experiencer with the specific intent of masking the true nature of what occurred.

Whitley Strieber is the author of what is probably the most widely recognized book on the alien-abduction phenomenon: the best-selling Communion, which was published in 1987, the cover of which displays a near-hypnotic image of an alien entity. It may not be a coincidence that immediately after the first abduction experience that Strieber recalled, on December 26, 1985, his mind was filled with owl-based imagery. Strieber's sister had her own experience with an anomalous owl in the early 1960s. Strieber said that as his sister was driving between the Texas towns of Comfort and Kerrville, after the witching hour had struck, "she was terrified to see a huge light sail down and cross the road ahead of her. A few minutes later an owl flew in front of the car. I have to wonder

if that is not a screen memory, but my sister has no sense of it."

The next thing she knew, she was parked at the side of the road with what she was able to determine was no fewer than two hours of time unaccounted for….

In 2013, I received an email from a woman now living in the English town of Lowestoft but who previously lived very close to Mawnan—where the Owlman was seen in 1976—specifically in the small Cornwall village of Gweek, the distance between which, by car, is approximately six and a half miles. It transpires that in 1998, she had a profound UFO encounter while taking the road from Mawnan to Gweek. It was after 11:00 P.M., and the woman was driving home after visiting a friend in Mawnan. She had barely left the little village when she saw what she could only describe as a UFO, one that appeared at the side of the road—around the size of a large beach ball, glowing bright orange. The next thing she knew, she was parked at the side of the road with what she was able to determine was no fewer than two hours of time unaccounted for—but something else happened, too: as she came out of her groggy state, she caught sight of a huge, owl-like creature that had somewhat humanoid characteristics attached to it, too. It was hovering in the air at a height of around fifteen feet but was not employing the use of its wings to keep it aloft. Given the fact that this was practically on the doorstep of where the Owlman was seen back in 1976 (and since, too), the idea that the two issues are unconnected is highly unlikely.

The witness admitted that she knew of the Owlman legend. Living so close to Mawnan, it would be more astonishing had she

not heard of it. She could tell me little more beyond the facts surrounding the sighting of the curious ball of light, the period of missing time, and the appearance of a "humanoid owl," as I term it. This particular encounter—which has not been publicized before—set me thinking. What if the Owlman of Cornwall is not a beast of cryptozoological proportions after all? What if, instead, it is some strange manifestation of the UFO phenomenon, one that is designed to trick the witnesses into thinking they have encountered a large owl when, in reality, the event was of an otherworldly nature? A screen memory, in other words. Maybe we need to reevaluate the true nature of the enigmatic Owlman.

My reasoning for suggesting this is simple: numerous cases on record link sightings of what are perceived as owls (and sometimes as impossibly large owls) and UFOs together both in terms of the time frame and the geographical location. Indeed, Mike Clelland has written a couple of excellent books on this very issue of how and why owls and alien incidents go together hand in glove.

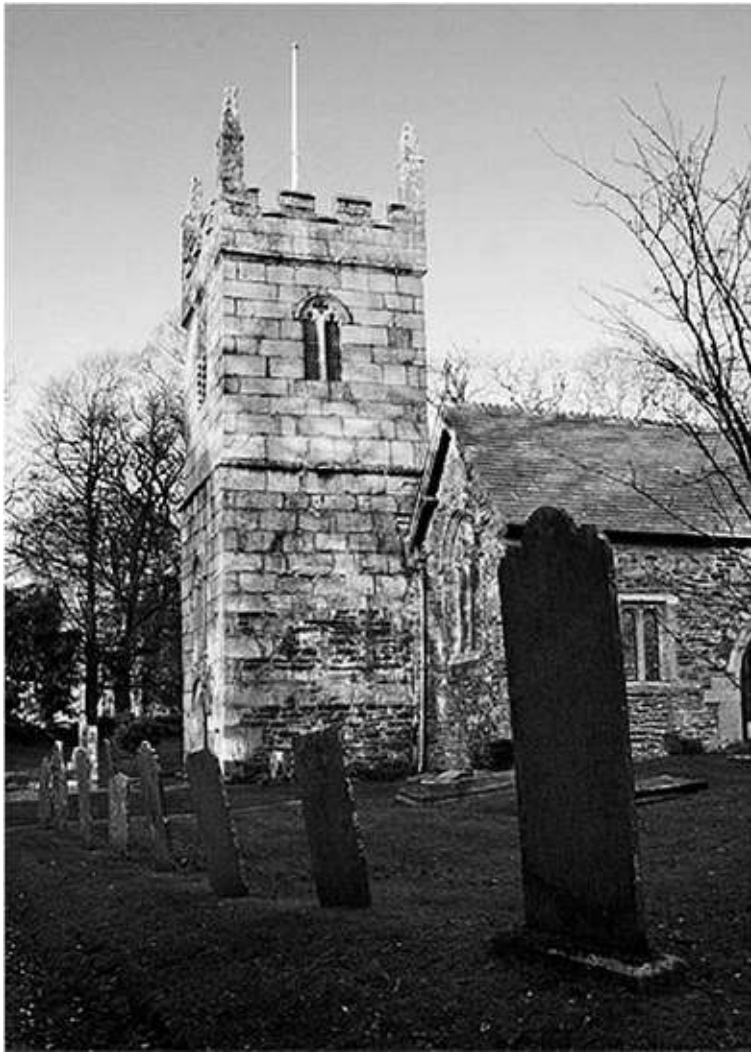
All of this brings me to two matters that, given the location—Mawnan—cannot be a coincidence. Number one: Liz Randall is a friend of mine who has compiled an excellent, two-volume collection of her writings on all things paranormal titled From Lyonesse to Alien Big Cats and Back Again. Liz referred me to an article she wrote in 2004 that deals with something that her daughter experienced in 2003 at the church itself. Liz said in 2004: "Very early one morning a year ago, in the late summer of 2003, my adult daughter, who lives in Mawnan Smith, Cornwall, had a strange experience. Being a thoughtful neighbor, and not wanting to disturb anyone, at 02:00 A.M. she and a friend had wanted to

listen to some music. So she took her car up to the car park of the old local church because it's such an isolated spot."

Liz continued: "After about ten minutes my daughter and her friend suddenly became aware of a block of blue/white light above their heads. It was pulsating in that it stopped and then started again, for seconds at a time, although it remained stationary overhead. Neither were aware of any missing time, but they also had no idea how long they remained near the churchyard before they went home. And, when they reached home, both were so tired that they simply went to sleep without checking the clock."

Things don't end there, which leads us into matter number two. Liz also directed me to a case that author and anomalies authority Paul Devereux wrote on the high strangeness at Mawnan Church. Paul wrote of a November 1996 case that was brought to his attention: "A woman on the Lizard peninsula saw a 'block of light' materialize above Mawnan Smith church. It was rectangular and orange-red in color. As it hung motionless, another block of light 'switched on' some distance away. The first one went out, then reappeared."

With that said, let's take a closer look at Mawnan and its church, both of which appear to be magnets for paranormal and Fortean activity. The Church of England says: "Mawnan is probably named after a sixth century Saint Maunanus. Little is known about him but probably he was a Breton monk who landed here about 520 C.E. The site of this church was already sacred since it is built within the confines of an ancient earthwork, which was still in an excellent state of preservation when the churchyard was enlarged in 1920."



Mawnan Old Church in Cornwall marked the epicenter of the Owlman sightings that began in the 1970s.

It may well be an underappreciated equivalent of one of John Keel's legendary "window areas," places where just about anything and everything weird can be seen and encountered….

Interestingly, ancient earthworks of the type referenced in the paragraph above are very often the focus of supernatural activity. I

know this, as I grew up very near to one in Staffordshire, England. Its name is Castle Ring, which was built during the Iron Age and was home to a Celtic tribe called the Cornovii. I can say with certainty that Castle Ring has a long history of encounters with UFOs, Bigfoot-type creatures, spectral figures, and much more. Why? Well, that's the big question that, unfortunately, eludes us.

What I would say, however, is that I think investigating the Owlman itself—as a solitary, stand-alone mystery—will only allow us to see a small portion of what's afoot in this particularly mysterious part of Cornwall. In our quest for the truth of the beast and of the Owlman/anomalous owls/UFO connection, too, it is very likely that Mawnan itself is what we should be focusing on. It may well be an underappreciated equivalent of one of John Keel's legendary "window areas," places where just about anything and everything weird can be seen and encountered….

"I get a strong sense that Mike was guided to write this by the UFO intelligence and I think the reader will get that. This is the first time I have seen this level of both a book and its author being inextricably linked to the phenomenon itself since Strieber and Communion. Communion was clearly more than just a book; I believe the phenomenon intended it to be written, published, and read on a large scale. I think Mike's book is another example of this."

The above quote is mine and was written as a blurb for Mike Clelland's book The Messengers: Owls, Synchronicity and the UFO Abductee. As my words make clear, Clelland's book is a very important one for several reasons: (a) the subject matter is one that

a lot of people in ufology may have heard of but has not (until now) received the scrutiny it deserves; (b) the author is an integral part of the story and is, therefore, in an ideal position to comment on it; (c) the book demonstrates that approaching and studying the UFO phenomenon purely from the "nuts and bolts" angle is as pointless as it is utterly misguided; and (d) The Messengers reveals time and time again something that so many who have immersed themselves in the UFO enigma have come to realize—namely, that the investigator often attracts the deep attention of the phenomenon and, as a result, becomes an integral part of the story. Arguably, the investigator even becomes the subject of significant manipulation.

Given that the book runs to almost four hundred pages and deals with a curious, underappreciated and underreported phenomenon, some might assume that The Messengers contains a great deal of padding. They would, however, be dead wrong. The sheer, collective level of data, witness testimony, and case histories is massive and, as you will surely have guessed by the title of this article, the book deals with the connection between the UFO phenomenon and owls. A deeply strange phenomenon, to be sure.

The chapter titled "Owls as a Screen Memory" demonstrates something notable: that the UFO phenomenon often uses the owl motif as a means to mask the real nature of certain UFO encounters. Witnesses tell of seeing impossibly large owls, very often while driving late at night, in situations involving so-called "Missing Time." We're talking about people assuming they saw large, anomalous owls when the reality of the situations was likely very different. Does the UFO phenomenon utilize owl-like imagery to try to ensure that the witness fails to realize what really happened? This particular chapter suggests that that's exactly what's going on.

This issue is further expanded on in the "Owls and the UFO Abductee" chapter, which further amplifies the connections. What's particularly interesting about this chapter, however, is that it shows that many encounters between owls and abductees involve real owls and not screen memories of something very different. In other words, as Mike Clelland shows time and time again, the answer to this puzzle is not based solely around an "aliens are hypnotizing people into thinking they have seen owls rather than E.T.s"-themed situation. It's way weirder.

This all leads us toward another fascinating chapter: "Owls = UFOs = Synchronicity." I have personally experienced numerous UFO-themed synchronicities over the years, some of them of a very bizarre and surreal nature. You may well have found yourselves in such situations, too. Certainly, in relation to owls of both the real and the mysterious kind, Clelland has some amazing accounts to relate, some of them focused upon himself.

Author Mike Clelland speculated in his book The Messengers that sightings of enormous owls are connected to the UFO phenomenon.

What's going on, then? Well, without giving away all of Clelland's theories and ideas, it's important to note that the book goes far beyond the matter of those aforementioned "nuts and bolts"-type UFOs. We're talking about such issues as owls, the afterlife, and the realm of the dead; the domain of ancient, owl-based folklore and mythology; owl-themed dreams; connections between owls and altered states of mind; matters relative to conspiracy and cover-up; and mysterious owls in the worlds of movies, novels, and television.

As Mike Clelland skillfully demonstrates, the UFO–owl issue is a real one. It's not, however, an issue that can be explained in simple terms. The entire situation is multifaceted, requires an open mind to be appreciated, and is fascinating, uplifting, and disturbing

in equal measures. This is a very important book on an enigma-filled topic that—finally—has the extensive treatment it deserves, and it may very well radically change your thoughts on the real nature of the UFO enigma and also on what passes for reality itself.

Finally, on the matter of the Owlman, we'll take a trip to Loch Ness, Scotland—a place we have already visited, which may be home to an extraterrestrial lake monster: Nessie. Loch Ness, Scotland—a body of water around twenty-two miles long—is mostly noted for its legendary, resident monster: Nessie. It's a fact, though, that Loch Ness has been the site of additional weirdness—not just for years or decades but for centuries. Long before Nessie was on the scene, Loch Ness was the haunt of water horses and kelpies. They were supernatural shapeshifters that would drag people into the deep water, drowning them and stealing their souls. Aleister Crowley (the "Great Beast") owned a home at Loch Ness. Its name was Boleskine House. Visitors to, and subsequent owners of, Boleskine House talked of strange vibes and of shadowy, supernatural things lurking in the old house. More than a few UFO encounters have occurred at Loch Ness, and Nessie seeker Ted Holiday had a chilling encounter at the loch with a Man in Black. Then there is the matter of a curious owl seen at Loch Ness in 2007.

The story involves a Scottish woman I shall refer to as "Maxine," who I met in 2014. On a clear, summer day in 2007, Maxine was walking her dog along the hills that overlook Loch Ness when she saw what, from her description, I can only describe as an "alien Grey." When she first saw it at a distance of a couple

hundred feet, she assumed it was a young child—chiefly because of its short height.

As she got closer and as her dog froze to the spot, she could see that not only was it not a young boy, it wasn't even human. Maxine and the Grey stared at each other for just a few seconds, after which it stretched its arms out and, in an instant, transformed into what Maxine described as an impossibly large owl: it was practically man sized. It immediately took to the skies and headed across the loch at a fast rate. Maxine continued to watch, with astonishment, as the alien–owl thing vanished into the trees on the opposite side of the loch.

Maxine is 100 percent sure that she did not experience missing time. She does not have any vague memories of being taken aboard some kind of futuristic, alien craft. She is not plagued by graphic nightmares involving extraterrestrials. In fact, she is completely sure that what she recalls is exactly what she saw: a small, alien creature literally shapeshifting into the form of an owl.

Interestingly, since her experience took place, Maxine has come up with an intriguing theory to try to explain and rationalize the situation. She now believes that the Greys have the ability to transform their physical appearances. This, she also suggests, means that the Greys can spy on us whenever, and wherever, they choose without being noticed for what they really are. If we see an owl, a black cat, a German shepherd dog—the list goes on—we may actually be seeing something very different: a shapeshifting E.T. using a piece of brilliant camouflage.

Whatever you may think of Maxine's theory (and her experience, too), the fact is that numerous cases of UFOs and aliens are associated with, and linked to, owls.

PENNSYLVANIA SASQUATCH

Many Bigfoot researchers are loath to investigate reports that appear to have connections to the UFO phenomenon. Likewise, numerous flying saucer investigators are highly reluctant to study accounts in which the witness claims to have seen not just UFOs or aliens but large, hairy man-beasts, too, very often in the same time frame and location. One person who is not afraid to delve into such controversial areas is Stan Gordon, a longtime investigator of both phenomena in his native Pennsylvania.

Gordon shares, from his case files, a Bigfoot–UFO wave that hit Pennsylvania in 2010: "Sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects were frequently reported by residents of the Keystone State during 2010. Among the other odd events reported were encounters with strange creatures such as Bigfoot and giant birds, unexplained sounds, strange sky flashes and anomalous photographs. Reports

of such mysterious events which crossed my desk during 2010, originated from forty-nine counties in Pennsylvania. In 1969 I established a hotline for the public to report UFO sightings. Today I still receive current reports concerning UFO sightings, Bigfoot, and any type of strange incidents from across Pennsylvania.…

"The information on cases which I receive are either reported to me directly, or originate from other sources, including various local and national researchers, many of which I have contact with. Also some reports are received from various local or national organizations. For example, The National UFO Reporting Center, www.nuforc.org, and the Pennsylvania chapter of the Mutual UFO Network, www.mufonpa.com also receive UFO reports from this state. The Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society (PBS), www.pabigfootsociety.com, conducts field studies searching for evidence of Bigfoot in the state.

On December 9, 1965, a fireball swooshed across the sky that was seen in six U.S. states and part of Canada. The model in this picture supposedly recreates an object people say crashed near Kecksburg, Pennsylvania, that night.

"It is now approaching fifty-two years that I have been investigating and collecting information on these ongoing yearly strange accounts that originate from Pennsylvania. During that time period, I was involved with the investigations of thousands of very strange events. During the many on-scene investigations that I was involved with, there were some cases where some interesting physical evidence was observed at the scene. I personally, however, have never had a UFO sighting or had an encounter with Bigfoot.

“I began my field investigations after the Kecksburg UFO incident in 1965. Since that time, it has become clear that many UFO sightings, creature encounters, and various paranormal events when properly investigated are determined to originate from a natural or man-made source. There are some incidents of this nature that occur year after year, however, that are not easily explained away. Some of the UFO observations reported during 2010 could be explained as bright planets and stars, meteors, conventional aircraft, and Chinese lanterns or similar home-made hot air balloons.

“Reported UFO sightings from across Pennsylvania started in January and continued throughout the 2010 year. Some of the UFO reports which came to my attention, can be found at: http://www.stangordon.info/sightings.htm.

“A number of UFO sightings were reported from various statewide locations on May 26, 2010. I interviewed a woman, who along with her passenger was traveling on a busy roadway in the metro Pittsburgh area. On that morning, they observed a bright silver metallic disc shaped object rotating in circles as it moved steadily across the sky. An attempt to take a picture of it was unsuccessful.

“On July 5 close to Jeannette in Westmoreland County, two people watched a bright yellow-orange light move across the sky that seemed to be pulsating or rotating. The object passed overhead, and three white lights positioned in a triangular pattern were attached to the underside of a darker silent object which moved towards the east. On July 17, also near Jeannette, another witness reported a bright star-like object high in the sky that began to pulsate and grew larger in size. It pulsated two to three times, then the object became dim, and soon just vanished.

“On the evening of July 18, in Hempfield Township outside of

Greensburg, several independent observers that I interviewed observed a bright orange-yellow glowing object moving slowly across the sky. One of the observers took several color photographs before the object seemed to accelerate as it moved off in the distance sky. One picture clearly shows three white lights in a triangular pattern. (Note: For several months there were numerous reports of luminous glowing objects being reported. It is quite likely that some of these reports can be attributed to someone launching Chinese lanterns or other similar home-made hot air balloon devices.)

"Mini-UFOs: There were a number of reports of close range observations of small sized UFOs. Over the years I have received a number of similar types of reports.

"Near Derry in July, a man who was taking a walk observed a pale white solid sphere that appeared to be about two inches in diameter. The slowmoving object was observed about fifteen feet above the ground, and approached the witness to a distance of about fifteen feet. The witness watched as the object moved around some trees, then continued on in the distance. In August, near Norvelt, a witness reported observing a rectangular object about eight to nine feet long, rounded in the front, with a soft white glow to it. The object was observed as it moved about three feet above the ground, and was about fifteen feet from the observer.

"On November 24, on the Youngstown side of the Chestnut Ridge, two witnesses observed a red spherical object about sixty yards away in a wooded area. One of the observers moved closer to the object to try to figure out what it was. The object, which was about three to four feet off the ground, was of an unusual configuration. The observer who approached to about seventy feet from the object said that it looked somewhat like, 'a ball with the

top quarter cut off.'

"The man explained that the top quarter was the 'orb,' which was flat on the bottom section. The entire object was estimated to be about sixty to seventy-two inches long, and about thirty to thirty-six inches high. The silent object was a solid red color, but non-glowing with a colored edge, and a bottom. While the object remained motionless, some sort of white spark was observed emitting from the bottom section. The object slowly moved off, made some direction changes, then with great speed moved over a hill and was lost from sight.

"Strange Creatures: Bigfoot and Thunderbirds:

In Westmoreland and Fayette Counties there are still incidents of Bigfoot being reported with regularity.

"Bigfoot sightings continue to be reported yearly from various locations across Pennsylvania. Westmoreland and Fayette Counties

continue to be active areas where such reports have historically originated from. In June, two people say that they saw a seven-to-eight-foottall man-like creature covered with tan-brown hair at dusk in Derry Township. I also interviewed a fellow who had been a hunter for many years, but it wasn't until one early morning in July that he saw something he could not explain. The event occurred in Allegheny County, near a tree line. The witness observed a man-like creature covered with reddish-brown hair that stood at least seven and a half feet tall from a distance of about fifty to sixty feet. The creature was very broad shouldered and had very long arms. The creature was observed for about forty seconds.

"The Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society (PBS) also received a number of reports of possible Bigfoot sightings from Fayette, Westmoreland and Cambria counties. One case they investigated occurred in April near Scottdale. A man was awakened by his dogs barking at something outside. He investigates and hears sounds like a woman screaming. He looks outside to see a large creature on all fours walking around the yard. The creature than stands up on two legs. It is described as about six feet tall, very thin, and covered with dark hair. The creature with arms swinging, walks off into the woods near the house. The PBS investigates and finds one possible track that measured sixteen inches long.

"There continues to be observations of giant birds with oversized wingspans reported from areas of Pennsylvania. There has been a long history of such observations from the Keystone State, as well as other parts of the United States. Many accounts refer to such observations as 'Thunderbird sightings.' Some of these sightings are likely misidentifications of known bird species observed from various distances and under various lighting conditions. Some reports however include close range

observations with detailed accounts.

“One such incident occurred on August 26 in South Greensburg in Westmoreland County. It was just getting dark when four people at a cookout heard a “swoosh” sound causing them to look to the sky. A tremendous bird was flying over a tree in the yard about thirty to forty feet overhead. It was estimated that if the bird was on the ground, it would stand between four and a half to five feet tall. The entire body was either darkish brown or black in color. The body width was about twenty-five to thirty inches wide.

“It was the size of the wingspan which was estimated to be ten feet or more that impressed the observers. The observers watched as the huge bird flapped its wings as it moved down the road, taking about twenty seconds to go a distance of about a quarter mile as it moved off over some trees. It was just a short distance from this location where in September of 2001, another witness saw a huge dark bird with a massive wingspan flying over the traffic on Route 119.”

QUETZALCOATL

Within the realms of ufology, the paranormal, the folkloric, and conspiracy theorizing, quite possibly no phenomenon is guaranteed to provoke more controversy, debate, and unbridled paranoia than that concerning the Reptilians. Diabolical and ominous shapeshifting entities from faraway star systems and twilight dimensions beyond our own, the Reptilians are coldhearted, ruthless entities that have played formative roles in the development and manipulation of human history, folklore, mythology, and culture. They are the secret rulers of the planet, exerting powerful, Machiavellian influence over each and every one of us.

Seven to twelve feet tall, green-skinned, scaled, and monstrous, the Reptilians are the real masters of the world. Using their shapeshifting skills, they have infiltrated and enslaved

government, industry, society, royalty, and even the world of Hollywood. In fact, just about no one is free of the terrifying presence and wrath of the dreaded Reptilians. They are creatures whose existence and presence in our world has nurtured legends of dragons, aliens, and demons. Even the biblical story of the talking snake that tempted Adam and Eve to eat from the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden can be traced back to Reptilian presence and control.

The Reptilians are the masterminds behind alien abductions. They greedily feast upon the thousands of people who, every year, vanish without a trace. They surround us at all times, disguised and camouflaged, using and abusing us as the mood and the need take them. They can even count Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Charles among their vile, flesh-eating, and blood-drinking numbers. Their mightiest of all figures secretly inhabit vast, underground caverns that exist far below our surface world—so we are told by the conspiracy minded, at least.

Perhaps the most famous of all the Reptilians was Quetzalcoatl, a god of Mesoamerican lore—Mesoamerican meaning central to the cultures and people of Mexico, Belize, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. According to predominantly Aztec legend, Quetzalcoatl was a highly advanced entity with near-magical skills and possessed of highly advanced sciences who tried to bring civilization, technology, and a new world to the Mesoamericans. His name translates as “feathered serpent,” hence the potential connection to the controversy surrounding the so-called Reptilians of UFO lore.

Nicoletta Maestri says of Quetzalcoatl that he is "represented in many different ways according to different epochs and Mesoamerican cultures. He is both represented in his non-human form, as a feathered serpent with plumage along its body and around the head, and in his human form, especially among the Aztecs and in colonial codices. In his human aspect, he is often depicted in dark color with a red beak, symbol of Ehecatl, the wind god, and with a cut shell as a pendant, symbol of Venus. In many images he is depicted wearing a plumed headdress and holding a plumed shield."

So far as can currently be determined, the worship of this enigmatic deity began at some point between 100 B.C.E. and 100 C.E. It should be noted, however, that devotion to serpentlike gods in Mesoamerica in general began much earlier. Evidence of such worship can be found in Tabasco, Mexico, which is estimated to have dated back to at least 900 B.C.E., when it was embraced by the Olmec people.

Quetzalcoatl is carved in stone at the Xochicalco temple in Morelos, Mexico. Might this feathered serpent be connected in some way to Reptilian aliens?

As evidence of the influence that serpent gods had over Mesoamericans, one only has to take a look at the Temple of the Feathered Serpent, which is situated in Teotihuacan, around thirty miles outside of Mexico City, and was constructed around 100 B.C.E. Classic imagery of feathery serpents, or war serpents, adorns the huge step-pyramid, as it is known, which is also termed the Temple of Queztalcoatl, even though it predates widespread worship of Quetzalcoatl. Such was the reverence with which the people viewed their serpent god, human sacrifice to them was both widespread and commonplace.

Interpretations on what, or who, Quetzalcoatl was are as many as they are varied. Within Mormon lore, we are told: "The story of the life of the Mexican divinity, Quetzalcoatl, closely resembles that of the Savior; so closely, indeed, that we can come to no other conclusion than that Quetzalcoatl and Christ are the same being. But the history of the former has been handed down to us through an impure Lamanitish source, which has sadly disfigured and perverted the original incidents and teachings of the Savior's life and ministry."

Karl Andreas Taube is an archaeologist who has studied the stories of Quetzalcoatl and states that, in his opinion, the god symbolized fertility. He also says: "It is possible that the alternating serpent heads, Quetzalcoatl and the War Serpent, refer to dual aspects of rulership, the feathered serpent with fertility and the interior affairs of the state, and the War Serpent with military conquest and empire."

David Carrasco, a noted historian, has suggested that Quetzalcoatl is a deity that represents culture and civilization. Now we come to the most controversial theory of all: that Queztalcoatl was an ancient astronaut, one who was determined to bring culture and science to what he perceived as a decidedly primitive body of

people.

On this matter, it is intriguing to note that throughout Mesoamerica, Quetzalcoatl was associated with the planet Venus. Alberto Mendo notes that "the date of birth of Quetzalcoatl and the day when Venus reappears on the same position in the eastern horizon once every eight years" is the same.

Author Vicky Anderson says: "To the ancient Maya and the Aztecs, the god Xolotl was the evening star and his brother Quetzalcoatl was the morning star. The Maya and the Aztecs prophecy that, one day, the god Quetzalcoatl will return to the Earth from Venus."

John Major Jenkins offers the opinion that "the Toltec pantheon that represented the Zenith Cosmology was Quetzalcoatl, whose earliest astronomical association is with the Pleiades.… The Pleiades were known as the serpent's rattle, and the flight of the Pleiades into alignment with the zenith sun evoked the image of a flying serpent."

The fact that Quetzalcoatl was so inextricably tied to the heavens above makes it relatively easy to understand why suggestions have been made that he was an extraterrestrial entity.

Quetzalcoatl researcher Rick Popko has a scenario for the nature of the legend that is definitively extraterrestrial themed but in a different way. He offers the following:

"The theory I have is that Q was actually a very large UFO. As the craft entered Earth's atmosphere, it broke into flames and began its long descent, flaming, smoking and spiraling out of control. If this thing was multiple football fields in size, from the

ground, it could very well look like a flaming serpent head, and the spiral smoke trails could be interpreted as feathers. Of course, a ship of this size is going to make a big impact when it crashes and probably take out a lot of innocent people in the process. Keep in mind most of these people have probably never seen anything like this in their lives, let alone watch it crash into their society and kill a bunch of people. Heck if I were there at the time, I'd probably bow down to it as my god as well."

Quetzacoatl was sometimes depicted as more of a serpent and other times more like a man, but the god of wisdom and wind always had a reptilian look.

The website Arcturi notes: “Ancient Aliens have been suspected to have helped create many wonders we see today including the massive Temples found through Central America and the Yucatan Peninsula. Like other great American civilizations, Reptilians have been an integral part in the Aztec civilization which cultivated a belief system around the alien we now know as the Reptilians.”

Writer Paul Dale Roberts says of the Quetzalcoatl saga: “What is also interesting is that there is a reptilian influence.… The reptilian influence is saturated throughout Egypt, East Asia, India and the list goes on and on.

“I believe the reptilian influence represents ancient astronauts that resembled reptiles. The reptile influence can even be found in our own bible as it was the serpent that influenced Eve to bite from the forbidden fruit. Could it be that ancient astronauts back long ago were living amongst our advanced cultures like the Phoenicians, Egyptians and bringing their knowledge of science, math and astronomy to cultures like the Olmecs, Toltecs and Mayans?”

Roberts provides us with a notable statement to ponder on: “As the pieces of the puzzle come together, it appears that Erich Anton Paul von Daniken [author of Chariots of the Gods, which claimed aliens influenced ancient human societies] may have been right all along.”

Now let us take a look at the matter of mermaids and mermen for good reason: In many of the old legends, Quetzalcoatl came from the sea, no less. Could the likes of Quetzalcoatl and others of

his kind have prompted tales and legends of mer-people? Certainly, no lack of such reports exists. The word "mermaid" is derived from a combination of "mere," an old English word meaning "sea," and "maid," as in "woman." According to old, sea-faring legends, mermaids would often deliberately sing to sailors to try to enchant them with the secret and malevolent intent of distracting them from their work and causing their ships to run disastrously aground. Other ancient tales tell of mermaids inadvertently squeezing the last breaths out of drowning men while attempting to rescue them. They are also said to particularly enjoy taking humans to their underwater lairs. In Hans Christian Andersen's The Little Mermaid, for example, it is said that mermaids often forget that humans cannot breathe underwater, while other legends suggest that the sinister she-creatures deliberately drown men out of sheer, venomous spite, no less.

The fabled sirens of Greek mythology are sometimes portrayed in folklore as being mermaidlike in nature and appearance. Other related types of mythical, legendary creatures that fall into this category include water nymphs and selkies, animals that can allegedly transform themselves from seals into human beings—and vice versa, too.

Mermaids were noted in British folklore as being distinctly unlucky omens—occasionally foretelling disaster and sometimes even maliciously provoking it, too. As evidence of this, several variations on the ballad "Sir Patrick Spens" depict a mermaid speaking to the doomed ships. In some, she tells the crews that they will never see land again, and in others, she claims that they are near the shore, which the men are wise and astute enough to know means that deep, malevolent deception is at work. The ballad itself is of Scottish origins and may possibly refer to an event: namely, the bringing home of the Scottish Queen Margaret,

Maid of Norway, across the North Sea in 1290. Some speculate that the ballad may relate to a voyage by the princess's mother in 1281, but regardless of the specific truth behind the ballad itself, its words are prime evidence of both the knowledge and the deep fear of mermaids that has existed in the British Isles for an untold number of centuries.

One such account tells of a deadly mermaid inhabiting a small pool in the pleasant, little village of Child's Ercall, England. In 1893, writer Robert Charles Hope described the story as follows:

"There was a mermaid seen there once. It was a good while ago, before my time. I dare say it might be a hundred years ago. There were two men going to work early one morning, and they had got as far as the side of the pond in [a] field, and they saw something on the top of the water which scared them not a little. They thought it was going to take them straight off to the Old Lad himself! I can't say exactly what it was like, I wasn't there, you know; but it was a mermaid, the same as you read of in the papers.

"The fellows had almost run away at first, they were so frightened, but as soon as the mermaid had spoken to them, they thought no more of that. Her voice was so sweet and pleasant, that they fell in love with her there and then, both of them. Well, she told them there was a treasure hidden at the bottom of the pond—lumps of gold, and no one knows what. And she would give them as much as ever they liked if they would come to her in the water and take it out of her hands.

"So they went in, though it was almost up to their chins, and she dived into the water and brought up a lump of gold almost as big as a man's head. And the men were just going to take it, when one of them said: 'Eh!' he said (and swore, you know), 'if this isn't a bit of luck!' And, my word, if the mermaid didn't take it away from them again, and gave a scream, and dived down into

the pond, and they saw no more of her, and got none of her gold. And nobody has ever seen her since then. No doubt the story once ran that the oath which scared the uncanny creature involved the mention of the Holy Name."

Let's move on to the story of Mermaid's Pool (also known as Blakemere Pond), which can be found in the Staffordshire, England, village of Thorncliffe on the Staffordshire Moorlands, which are dominated by forests, lakes, rolling hills, and crags. It's a story that dates back approximately one thousand years. Lisa Dowley has spent a great deal of time and effort pursuing the story and sorting fact from legend. She says:

"The story transpires that this particular mermaid was once a maiden of fair beauty, and it came to pass—for reasons that are unclear—that she was persecuted, and accused of various crimes, by a gentleman named Joshua Linnet. It is not clear whether these accusations included being a witch, or whether he may have had his amorous advances rejected.

"The said Mr. Linnet had this woman bound up, and thrown into the bottomless Blakemere Pond. As she fought for her breath and life, the woman screamed vengeance on her accuser, Joshua Linnet, and that her spirit would haunt the pool from that moment hence, and swore that one day she would drag her accuser and executioner deep down beneath the dark depths of the Blakemere Pond to his own death.

Blakemere Pond is an assuming little body of water in Staffordshire, England, just north-west of Leek that is associated with a legend about a mermaid's ghost.

"It is a recorded fact that three days later, Joshua Linnet was found face down, dead in the Blakemere Pond. When his body was dragged out and turned over by the locals, to their horror, what greeted them was that what was once his face, was now nothing more than tattered shreds of skin, the injuries seemingly caused by sharp claws or talons."

Situated barely a stone's throw from the Shropshire, England, town of Newport just over the border from rural Staffordshire, Aqualate Mere—at 1.5 kilometers long and 0.5 kilometers wide—is the largest natural lake in the Midlands, yet it is very shallow, extending down to little more than a uniform three feet. Legend has it that one day many years ago, when the Mere was being cleaned, a mermaid violently rose out of the water—quite naturally scaring the living daylights out of the workmen—while simultaneously making shrieking, disturbing, and damning threats to utterly destroy the town of Newport if any attempt was ever made to empty Aqualate Mere of its precious waters. Very wisely, perhaps, the Mere was not—and, to date, never has been—

drained.

Now let's take a look at the matter of mermen.

George Brisbane Scott Douglas (1856–1935) was the author of such acclaimed books as Scottish Fairy and Folk Tales and New Border Tales. He had a fascination for mysteries of the oceans, particularly so mermaids and the farless-mentioned matter of mermen. He said of mermen and mermaids that many strange tales emanated from Scotland's Shetland Isles. Beneath the depths of the ocean, according to these stories, Douglas said:

"An atmosphere exists adapted to the respiratory organs of certain beings, resembling in form the human race, possessed of surpassing beauty, of limited supernatural powers, and liable to the incident of death. They dwell in a wide territory of the globe, far below the region of fishes, over which the sea, like the cloudy canopy of our sky, loftily rolls, and they possess habitations constructed of the pearl and coral productions of the ocean. Having lungs not adapted to a watery medium, but to the nature of atmospheric air, it would be impossible for them to pass through the volume of waters that intervenes between the submarine and supramarine world, if it were not for the extraordinary power they inherit of entering the skin of some animal capable of existing in the sea, which they are enabled to occupy by a sort of demoniacal possession."

Douglas noted something that most people—having only a cursory knowledge of the merman/mermaid phenomenon—would likely be completely unware of. He acknowledged that although most people viewed such creatures as "of an animal human above

the waist, yet terminating below in the tail and fins of a fish," that was far from always being the case. He explained that the "most favorite form" was actually that of the "larger seal."

He explained that "possessing an amphibious nature, they are enabled not only to exist in the ocean, but to land on some rock, where they frequently lighten themselves of their sea-dress, resume their proper shape, and with much curiosity examine the nature of the upper world belonging to the human race. Unfortunately, however, each merman or merwoman possesses but one skin, enabling the individual to ascend the seas, and if, on visiting the abode of man, the garb be lost, the hapless being must unavoidably become an inhabitant of the earth."

Douglas not only was deeply familiar with mermen lore but also collected a number of fascinating accounts of encounters with what appear to have been—rather incredibly—real half-man, half-fish-like entities. As one example of many, we have the following from Douglas:

"A story is told of a boat's crew who landed for the purpose of attacking the seals lying in the hollows of the crags at one of the stacks. The men stunned a number of the animals, and while they were in this state stripped them of their skins, with the fat attached to them. Leaving the carcases on the rock, the crew were about to set off for the shore of Papa Stour, when such a tremendous swell arose that every one flew quickly to the boat. All succeeded in entering it except one man, who had imprudently lingered behind. The crew were unwilling to leave a companion to perish on the skerries, but the surge increased so fast that after many unsuccessful attempts to bring the boat close in to the stack the unfortunate wright was left to his fate."

Douglas continued, detailing how things quickly developed in a strange and unforeseen fashion: "A stormy night came on, and

the deserted Shetlander saw no prospect before him but that of perishing from cold and hunger, or of being washed into the sea by the breakers which threatened to dash over the rocks. At length he perceived many of the seals, who in their flight had escaped the attack of the boatmen, approach the skerry, disrobe themselves of their amphibious hides, and resume the shape of the sons and daughters of the ocean. Their first object was to assist in the recovery of their friends, who, having been stunned by clubs, had, while in that state, been deprived of their skins.

"When the flayed animals had regained their sensibility," said Douglas, "they assumed their proper form of mermen or merwomen, and began to lament in a mournful lay, wildly accompanied by the storm that was raging around, the loss of their sea-dress, which would prevent them from again enjoying their native azure atmosphere and coral mansions that lay below the deep waters of the Atlantic."

The chief lamentation of the mermen, said Douglas, was for one Ollavitinus, the son of Gioga, who, "having been stripped of his seal's skin, would be forever parted from his mates, and condemned to become an outcast inhabitant of the upper world. Their song was at length broken off by observing one of their enemies viewing, with shivering limbs and looks of comfortless despair, the wild waves that dashed over the stack. Gioga immediately conceived the idea of rendering subservient to the advantage of her son the perilous situation of the man. She addressed him with mildness, proposing to carry him safe on her back across the sea to Papa Stour, on condition of receiving the seal-skin of Ollavitinus."

A bargain was struck, added Douglas, and "Gioga clad herself in her amphibious garb; but the Shetlander, alarmed at the sight of the stormy main that he was to ride through, prudently begged

leave of the matron, for his better preservation, that he might be allowed to cut a few holes in her shoulders and flanks, in order to procure, between the skin and the flesh, a better fastening for his hands and feet. The request being complied with, the man grasped the neck of the seal, and committing himself to her care, she landed him safely at Acres Gio in Papa Stour, from which place he immediately repaired to a skeo at Hamna Voe, where the skin was deposited, and honorably fulfilled his part of the contract by affording Gioga the means whereby her son could again revisit the ethereal space over which the sea spread its green mantle."

ROYAL REPTILIANS

Is the British Royal Family comprised of dangerous, deadly, shapeshifting creatures? Are they not just like you and me but hideous, giant-sized Reptilians, the closest thing one can imagine to the fiction beast portrayed in the 1954 movie Creature from the Black Lagoon? Certainly, it's a scenario that many conspiracy theorists adhere to and, it must be said, a large body of data pertains to these allegedly human flesh-eating, blood-drinking monstrosities—but before we get to the matter of Queen Elizabeth II and the rest of the royals, let's first take a look at some classic accounts of Reptilians encountered over the course of the last six decades.

Certainly, one of the strangest of all encounters with what can only be described as a definitive Reptilian monster occurred on the night of Saturday, November 8, 1958. The unlucky soul who had

the misfortune to fall foul of the unearthly beast was Charles Wetzel, who at the time was driving his green, two-door Buick Super along North Main Street, Riverside, California, near the Santa Ana River. As Wetzel reached one particular stretch of the road that had flooded, the radio of his car began to crackle loudly in a highly distorted fashion. With the water levels high and Wetzel trying to figure out what was wrong with the radio, he slowed down purely and simply to ensure that he didn't find himself driving off the side of the road. He didn't know it at the time—but he soon would—that far worse things were possible than a flooded road and a wonky radio.

As Wetzel continued to slowly negotiate the road, he was shocked to the core by the sight of an extraordinary creature that surfaced from the shadows and, in brazen fashion, stood in the middle of the road, preventing Wetzel from going any farther. He could only sit and stare in a combination of fear and awe as he tried to take in and comprehend the thing that stood before him.

While some might consider a story like this to be nothing more than a hoax, the likelihood is that it was not.

Humanoid in shape and in excess of six feet in height, it had a large, round head described as being "pumpkin"-like, glowing eyes, a prominent mouth that had beaklike qualities to it, and scaly skin that resembled leaves. Strangest of all, the legs of the beast did not extend from beneath its torso but from its sides. Actually, that may not have been so strange, after all; both reptiles and lizards are built in precisely that fashion. Add to that a pair of long,

muscular arms, and you have a definitive monster.

What began as a bone-chilling standoff quickly mutated into something else entirely. The reptile man issued a loud, high-pitched noise that was part scream and part gurgle, after which it suddenly charged at Wetzel's Buick. He could only sit, paralyzed with fear, as the scaly thing raced toward the hood of the vehicle, then lunged even closer and violently clawed the windshield.

Although it was good fortune that led Wetzel to have a rifle with him, by his own admission, he was fearful about using it—but not because it might injure or kill the animal/man. Wetzel's big concern was that if he fired through the windshield and failed to kill it, the shattered glass would allow the monster to reach inside and haul him out of the car—possibly to tear him to pieces. With his body flooded with adrenaline, Wetzel took the only option he felt was available to him: he floored the accelerator, spun the wheels, and shot away. In doing so, he ran the beast down, which was evident by the fact that Wetzel felt the car go over its large body.

While some might consider a story like this to be nothing more than a hoax, the likelihood is that it was not. The rationale for this is that Wetzel quickly reported the affair to the local police, who launched an investigation. It's most unlikely that a hoaxer would run the risk of being charged for wasting police time or for filing a bogus report. Such was the seriousness with which the police took Wetzel's story that they sent not just officers out to the scene but a pack of bloodhounds, too. The monster, whatever it was, was never found—dead or alive. However, two pieces of evidence corroborated Wetzel's amazing experience: vicious-looking claw marks on the windshield and on the underside of the Buick. They were calling cards that Wetzel preferred to forget about—if he ever could.

In summer 1988, a terrifying creature began haunting the woods and little towns of Lee County, South Carolina—specifically the Scape Ore Swamp area. It quickly became known as Lizard Man as a result of its alleged green and scaly body. A bipedal lizard roaming the neighborhood? Maybe, yes. It all began—publicly if not chronologically—when on July 14, 1988, the Waye family phoned the Lee County sheriff 's office and made a very strange and disturbing claim. Something wild and animalistic had attacked their 1985 Ford. It looked as if something large, powerful, and deeply savage had viciously clawed, and maybe even bitten into, the body of the vehicle—particularly so the hood. Somewhat baffled, the deputies responded to the call nevertheless. Sure enough, the Wayes were right on target: their vehicle was battered and bruised in the extreme. In addition, footprints were discovered across the muddy area. It was clearly time to bring in Sheriff Liston Truesdale. The prints, most likely, were those of a fox. Larger prints, also found, were suspected of being those of a bear—although some observers suggested that they had human qualities.

A reptilian beast was spotted in the woods in Lee County, South Carolina's Scape Ore Swamp in 1988 (illustration).

In such a close-knit neighborhood, it didn't take long before news got around and numerous locals turned up to see what all the fuss was about. It's notable that Sheriff Truesdale told Bigfoot investigator Lyle Blackburn, who wrote the definitive book on the affair—titled, of course, Lizard Man—that "while we were there looking over this situation, we learned that people in the Browntown community had been seeing a strange creature about seven feet tall with red eyes. Some of them described it as green, but some of them as brown. They thought it might be responsible for what happened."

A mystery—and a monster—was unleashed.

The publicity afforded to the Waye incident prompted someone who ultimately became the key player in the matter to come forward. His name was Chris Davis, who was at the time

seventeen years of age. Chris's father, Tommy, had seen the sensationalized coverage given by the media to the attack on the Wayes' vehicle and contacted Sheriff Truesdale. Specifically, Tommy took his son to tell the police what he had told him. It was quite a story.

Back in 1988, Chris was working at a local McDonald's. On the night of June 29—roughly two weeks before the Waye affair exploded—Chris was on the late shift, which meant he didn't finish work until after 2:00 A.M. His journey home ensured that he had to take a road across the swamp—specifically a heavily forested part of the swamp. It was just minutes later that he had a blowout. Chris pulled up at a crossroads and, via the bright moonlight, changed the tire. As he finished the job and put the tools back into the trunk, Chris saw something looming out of the trees. Large, humanlike in shape, and possessing two glowing, red eyes and three fingers on each hand, it was something horrific. Chris panicked, jumped in his vehicle, and sped off. Based on what Chris had to say next, that was a very wise move:

"I looked back and saw something running across the field towards me. It was about 25 yards away and I saw red eyes glowing. I ran into the car and as I locked it, the thing grabbed the door handle. I could see him from the neck down—the three big fingers, long black nails and green rough skin. It was strong and angry. I looked in my mirror and saw a blur of green running. I could see his toes and then he jumped on the roof of my car. I thought I heard a grunt and then I could see his fingers through the front windshield, where they curled around on the roof. I sped up and swerved to shake the creature off."

The reports didn't end there.

Sheriff Truesdale received more and more reports to the extent that a near-X-Files-style dossier was compiled. It was an official police dossier that contained the fascinating account of Johnny Blythers, who, on July 31, 1990, described for the sheriff's department the events of the previous night:

"Last night about 10:30 P.M., we were coming home from the Browntown section of Lee County. It was me, my mother (Bertha Mae Blythers), [and] two sisters … I started talking about the time we passed the flowing well in Scape Ore Swamp. I said 'they ain't [sic] no such thing as a Lizard Man. If there was, somebody would be seeing it or caught it.'

"We got up about a mile or mile and one half past the butter bean shed, about 50 feet from the dirt road by those two signs, my mother was driving the car.

"It was on the right side; it came out of the bushes. It jumped out in the road. My mother swerved to miss it, and mashed the brakes and sped up. It jumped out of the bushes like he was going to jump on the car. When my mother mashed the brakes, it looked like it wanted to get in the car."

Johnny's mother, Bertha Mae, gave her own statement on that terrifying drive through the spooky swamp:

"This past Monday night I went to my mother's house in Browntown to pick up my son. We went to McDonald's on Highway 15 near Bishopville to get something to eat. We left there about twenty minutes after 10:00 P.M., was headed home and came through Browntown and Scape Ore Swamp.…

It jumped out of the bushes like he was going to jump on the car. When my mother mashed the brakes, it looked like it wanted to get in the car.

"We passed the bridge and was down the road near a mile. I was looking straight ahead going about twenty-five m.p.h., and I saw this big brown thing; it jumped up at the window. I quickly sped up and went on the other side of the road to keep him from dragging my eleven-year-old girl out of the car. I didn't see with my lights directly on it. It nearly scared me to death."

Then there was the statement of Tamacia Blythers, Bertha's daughter: "Tall—taller than the car, brown looking, a big chest, had big eyes, had two arms. Don't know how his face looked, first seen his eyes. Never seen nothing like it before. I didn't see a tail. Mother says if she hadn't whiped [sic] over he would have hit her car or jumped on it. Mother said she was so scared … she held her heart all the way home."

In addition, Lyle Blackburn has uncovered other reports of the beast dating from 1986 to well into the 2000s. Two of the key players in this saga are now dead: Johnny Blythers and Chris Davis: the former in a car accident in 1999 and the latter from a shotgun blast, the result of a drug deal gone bad almost a decade to the day after Blythers's death.

As for the legendary Lizard Man, what exactly was it? Certainly, the name provoked imagery of a malevolent, scaly, green monster. On the other hand, let's not forget that the beast was referenced as having a brown color. All of this leads us to Lyle Blackburn's conclusions. To his credit, Blackburn undertook a personal, on-site investigation with his colleague, Cindy Lee, and

studied all of the evidence in unbiased fashion. Blackburn noted that, despite the undeniably memorable name, the various descriptions of the beast as being brown in color simply did not accord with anything of a reptilian nature.

Blackburn suggests that if a Bigfoot dwelled in watery bottomlands, where it might become "covered in algae-rich mud or moss, this could explain its green, wet-like appearance. It doesn't explain the three fingers, but greenish mud which has dried and cracked could certainly give a scaly appearance."

Certainly, it's a good theory, far more likely than a huge, bipedal lizard roaming around the swamps of South Carolina.

Long-standing rumors suggest that a vast, underground alien base exists within, and below, a massive mesa at Dulce, Rio Arriba County, New Mexico. Interestingly, we can prove that a wealth of weird activity has occurred in the area. For example, the FBI has officially declassified a large file on cattle mutilations in and around Dulce spanning the mid- to late 1970s. Also, on December 10, 1967, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) detonated a twenty-nine-kiloton-yield nuclear device 4,240 feet below ground level in an attempt to provoke the release and, as a direct consequence, production of natural gas. Thus was born Gasbuggy: a program of an overall project known as Operation Plowshare, which, ostensibly, was designed to explore the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Notably, the location of the Gasbuggy test—which covered an area of 640 acres—was New Mexico's Carson National Forest, which just happens to be situated only twelve miles from the town of Dulce. Today, people are forbidden from digging

underground in that very area—which is very interesting in view of the underground base allegations.

Conspiracy theorists believe that an alien base is concealed somewhere beneath the surface of Rio Arriba County in New Mexico.

Within conspiracy-based research circles, it has been suggested that the nuclear detonation had a very different goal: namely, to destroy the aforementioned alien base and wipe out the deadly, hostile E.T.s. Certainly, it's a strange and foreboding story, and accounts are plentiful that suggest that such a base existed (and may still exist), in which freakish monsters were being created by the alien entities. As one example of many, we have the following from someone we might justifiably call a ufological whistle-blower/Edward Snowden.

"Sir, first off, if you want the full story let me know. But this

will explain how Mothman came about. U.S. energy secretary John Herrington named the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory and New Mexico's Los Alamos National Laboratory to house advanced genetic research centers as part of a project to decipher the human genome. The genome holds the genetically coded instructions that guide the transformation of a single cell, a fertilized egg, into a biological organism.

"'The Human Genome Project may well have the greatest direct impact on humanity of any scientific initiative before us today," said David Shirley, Director of the Berkeley Laboratory. Covertly, this research has been going on for years at the Dulce bio-genetics labs. Level 6 is hauntingly known by employees as "Nightmare Hall." It holds the genetic labs at Dulce. Reports from workers who have seen bizarre experimentation, are as follows:

"I have seen multi-legged 'humans' that look like half-human/halfoctopus. Also reptilian-humans, and furry creatures that have hands like humans and cries like a baby, it mimics human words. Also, huge mixtures of lizard-humans in cages. There are fish, seals, birds and mice that can barely be considered those species. There are several cages (and vats) of winged-humanoids, grotesque bat-like creatures, but three and a half to seven feet tall. Gargoyle-like beings and Draco-Reptoids.

"Level 7 is worse, row after row of thousands of humans and human mixtures in cold storage. Here too are embryo storage vats of humanoids in various stages of development. I frequently encountered humans in cages, usually dazed or drugged, but sometimes they cried and begged for help. We were told they were hopelessly insane, and involved in high risk drug tests to cure insanity. We were told to never try to speak to them at all. At the beginning we believed that story. Finally in 1978 a small group of workers discovered the truth."

All of this brings us to the most controversial claim of all, that which revolves around the British Royal Family.

Undoubtedly, when it comes to the matter of conspiracy theories—and highly inflammatory conspiracy theories—one controversial claim just about beats all of the rest. It's the assertion that the British Royal Family is a group of nothing less than deadly, bloodthirsty, shapeshifting monsters. "Bloodthirsty" is a very apt word to use since the royals are said to quaff on human blood just about as enthusiastically as the rest of the British population likes to knock back pints of beer in their local pub. They are shapeshifters with incredible power and influence. Here's where controversial becomes beyond controversial.

Welcome to the world of the Reptilians—eight-foot-tall, interdimensional monsters that masquerade as people but who are anything but.

Welcome to the world of the Reptilians—eight-foottall, interdimensional monsters that masquerade as people but who are anything but. At least, that's how the story goes. One person is to thank (if that's the correct term to use!) for bringing this strange and enduring claim to light. His name is David Icke. Once a well-known goalkeeper for Coventry City—an English soccer team—Icke is today a leading light in the shadowy domains where the conspiracy minded and the paranoid hang out. His books include

The Biggest Secret and The David Icke Guide to the Global Conspiracy.

Are the likes of Queen Elizabeth II, her husband Prince Philip (the Duke of Edinburgh), and the heir to the throne, Prince Charles, really monsters that are either (a) an ancient species that originated right here on Earth or (b) extraterrestrials from a faraway world? Well, let's start with the first theory. According to those who adhere to this particular theory, the Royal Family is at the top of the pile when it comes to the matter of who owns the planet.

Forget presidents and prime ministers; the real, secret force that controls and manipulates our world is the Babylonian Brotherhood, an ancient race of dangerous shapeshifters who were responsible for ancient tales of the likes of Quetzalcoatl—whose name means "feathered serpent," was a significant, deity-like force in Mesoamerica, and first surfaced around 100 B.C.E. Quetzalcoatl is also said to have been an entity that brought science, farming, and culture of that era and area, although given the apparent hatred that the Reptilians have for us, the likelihood is that Quetzalcoatl's actions were very likely self-serving and were designed to keep people in their place under his firm and coldhearted control and sway.

It's intriguing to note that almost three thousand years ago, the ancient people of Mexico had other serpent-based gods, which has helped to nurture the idea that yesterday's Reptilian gods are still among us and are just about as widespread today as they were way back when. Today, however, their influence is not just in

Mesoamerica but all across the world, even in the domain of politics, too. That's right; it's not just the British Royal Family who the conspiracy minded believe are monsters.

Leading Reptilians (so the likes of David Icke assure and warn us) include the Clintons (Bill and Hillary), Henry Kissinger—a former U.S. secretary of state and a national security advisor—and President George W. Bush. Oh, and lest we forget, the late Hollywood legend Bob Hope, too. Yes, really. Or not.

One of those who helped to bring this matter to the attention of the conspiracy obsessed—in quick time to both the media and popular culture, too—was a California woman named Arizona Wilder. She claims to have been mind controlled and manipulated by the likes of the world's most infamous secret society, the dreaded and feared Illuminati. Wilder's claims get even, ahem, wilder. She maintains that she has witnessed diabolical human sacrifice at the hands of the Rockefellers, the Rothschilds, members of the Bush family (as in two presidents of the United States Bushes), and at least one Pope. As for Queen Elizabeth II, well.…

President Bill Clinton and his wife, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, are two world leaders that some say are, beneath the surface, alien Reptilians.

Certainly, Arizona Wilder's most graphic and controversy-filled claim is that she witnessed the queen partake in such sacrifices and saw her eat the flesh, and drink the blood, of her unfortunate human victims. On one occasion, says Wilder, Queen Elizabeth was so fired up that she practically tore out a poor soul's throat, drinking it down as it spewed forth. According to Wilder, in her Reptilian form, the queen has skin that is a pale, sickly color. Her face, meanwhile, changes into something that closely resembles a beak.

Adding even more to this story is Wilder's claim that back in 1981, she met with then-Lady Diana, very soon to become Diana, Princess of Wales. According to Wilder, the princess was forced to

take part in a ritual of ancient and secret proportions, which involved the queen, Prince Philip, and Prince Charles and his lover and now wife, Camilla Parker-Bowles. Placed into a drugged-out state, Diana was told that one reason, and one reason only, existed for the marriage: to ensure that the royal/Reptilian bloodline continued. When Diana was tragically killed in Paris, France, in 1997—admittedly, an incident still shrouded in mystery and intrigue years later—Icke weaved her untimely death into his Reptilian scenario.

Are the numerous people who make up the British Royal Family shapeshifting reptiles with origins that date back millennia?

Conspiracy theorists who fully believed the Reptilian scenario practically foamed at the mouth when Mohammed al-Fayed—the father of Dodi Fayed, who was Diana's boyfriend at the time of her death and died with her in the terrible car crash that took three lives—referred to Camilla Parker-Bowles as Prince Charles's "crocodile wife." Then, when Fayed labeled the entire Royal Family as the "Dracula Family," it only added to the idea that the royals were copious drinkers of human blood. Was Dodi Fayed—in a slightly less-than-subtle fashion—trying to warn people of the growing Reptilian threat in the midst of just about everyone?

Today, the so-called Reptilian agenda terrifies, intrigues, and entertains near-endless numbers of people—and it's a phenomenon that clearly isn't going away anytime soon. Are the numerous people who make up the British Royal Family shapeshifting reptiles with origins that date back millennia? Is the

entire issue nothing but the likes of fabrication, lies, pranks, and jokes? Does it hazily lie somewhere in between? It all depends on who you ask—as is the case with practically all conspiracy theories of a highly bizarre nature. However, this saga has another aspect to it—which focuses on the matter of so-called alien abductions, as we'll now see.

It was on June 24, 1947, that the so-called modern era of ufology began with pilot Kenneth Arnold's encounter with a squadron of flying saucers over the Cascade Mountains, Washington State. It wasn't chiefly until the early years of the 1950s, however, that people began reporting encounters with alleged alien entities. That was the period in which, all across the United States, reports came pouring in of encounters with what became known as the Space Brothers. They were reported as being incredibly human looking and sported heads of long, blond hair. Typically, they would warn witnesses of the perils of atomic war and expressed concerns about our violent, warlike ways.

As the 1960s began, reports started to surface of so-called alien abductions, which really took off big-time in the 1970s and continued to be big news in the 1980s and 1990s. It was also in the 1980s that another development occurred in the matter of human–alien interaction. It all revolved around the aforementioned Reptilians. Not content with ruling the planet—under the shapeshifted guises of world leaders and royalty—the Reptilians have also surfaced prominently in the issue of alien abductions.

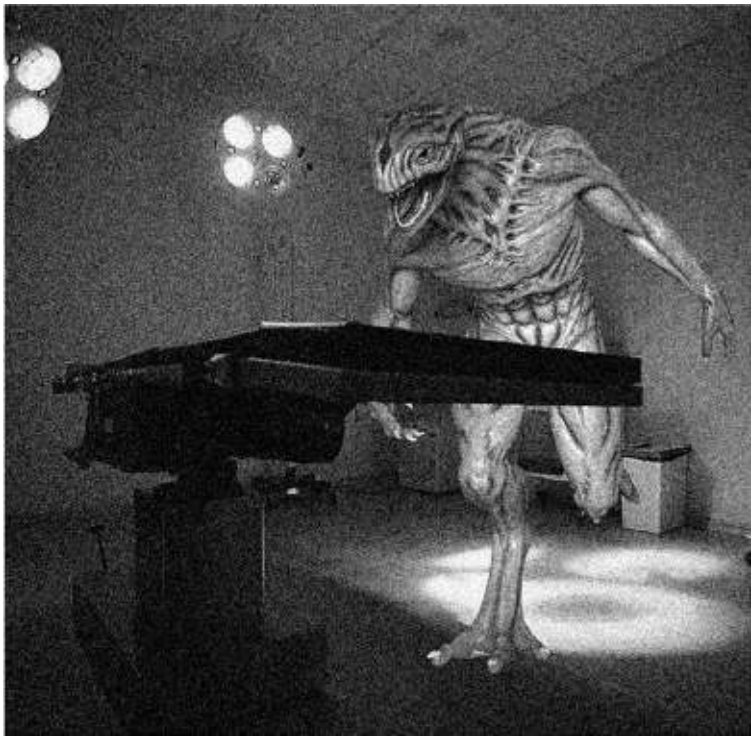
Stories told by abductees in relation to the Reptilian aspect are as controversial as they are with regard to matters concerning the

British Royal Family but for very different reasons. Predominantly, but not exclusively, the Reptilians are present during abductions aboard alleged alien spacecraft that involve women. They're not looking for DNA, cells, or our blood, however. It's sex that these appearance-changing stud muffins are after—and, apparently, more than a few women have been very satisfied by the experiences. One of them is Pamela Stonebrooke, a writer and jazz music performer/vocalist who makes no bones about the fact that, from her perspective, getting nailed aboard a UFO by the closest thing one can imagine to something that appears half human and half crocodile is not a bad thing. Not everyone agrees, however.

Many people who have experienced sex at the hands of the Reptilians are, quite understandably, reluctant to go public with their experiences—at least, not with their full names. One of those is "Audrey," a middle-aged woman who claims seven very close encounters with male Reptilians between 2001 and 2007. A resident of Sedona, Arizona—a place renowned for a wide range of paranormal phenomena—Audrey was first abducted by what she later recalled, in somewhat of a drugged, hypnotized state, was a group of military personnel in black fatigues late one night on the edge of town.

As she drove home after visiting a friend in Flagstaff, Audrey caught sight of a black van following her, which loomed out of the shadows and ran her off the road. The next thing she remembered was being manhandled into that same van. After that, it was lights out. She later woke up to find herself strapped down to a table in a brightly lit, circular room. In front of her were three men in those same fatigues—for a while, at least. As Audrey craned to sit up,

she watched in terror as all three men suddenly shimmered as if caught in something akin to a heat haze. Within around six of seven seconds, they were replaced by a trio of approximately eight-foot-tall, green-colored monsters that looked like Godzilla's younger and smaller brothers.



Audrey was placed on a table and, one by one, the godzilla-like creatures had sex with her.

Audrey states that the aliens moved toward the table, unstrapped her, and, one by one, had sex with her. She was somewhat embarrassed to admit that the encounter was exciting, even if fraught. She was, however, unable to shake off the taboo of what she described as having sex with animals—if that's what they really were. According to Audrey, all of the other experiences occurred in her own home—again, late at night—and sex was the only thing that went down, so to speak.

Perhaps the most disturbing encounter was the fourth one, in

which two men, dressed in black suits, white shirts, and red ties with near-identical, slicked-back hair, materialized in her bedroom as she lay in bed, listening to music on her iPod. As with the previous encounter, the men transformed into what looked like, as she described it, giant lizards. Once again, Audrey had a swinging time but was again eaten up by guilt, as she was on each and every subsequent occasion.

However, all of this had one unforeseen side effect: namely, for nearly a year after the final encounter occurred, whenever a man would look or stare at her, Audrey would have shivers go up and down her spine. She was fearful of the possibility that they, too, were shapeshifters that could take on human form but whose real form was that of a dangerous Reptilian. If a man looked at her for more than a second or two in a bar or in a restaurant, she would get the chills. If, while walking around Sedona, a man gave her a friendly nod, it meant that he was a Reptilian. Realizing that she was plunging into a state of near-mental illness, Audrey eventually pulled herself back from the brink of complete and utter paranoia and moved on with her life, as did, apparently, the Reptilians.

It should be noted that numerous such reports are on record —or, on far more occasions, off the record—that display uncannily similar aspects. This has led even some quite conservative alien-abduction researchers to take the matter of shapeshifting sex very seriously. One final thing is worth pondering: if these stories are not the result of wild fantasies and erotic dreams then perhaps an alien, Reptilian agenda really is on our planet. It's one thing to talk about scaly E.T.s with forked tongues and even thrashing tails who use women for sex; it's quite another, however, to suggest that they're running the entire planet —unless, of course, you have encountered the Reptilians yourself.

Sometimes, truth really is stranger than fiction—but on this particular issue, exactly how strange is still a matter of furious debate.

We'll close this part of the chapter on the matter of the Reptilians with the words of Pamela Stonebrooke, who prepared the following for free, public consumption that reveals her connection to the Reptilian phenomenon in all its stark reality. Prepared by Stonebrooke in 1998, it states: "I'm writing this in response to the news item that appeared in a recent issue of the New York Post about my forthcoming book, Experiencer: A Jazz Singer's True Account of Extraterrestrial Contact. Since the article unfortunately conveyed the impression that the book would be sensationalistic, it seems appropriate that I share some thoughts with you, and set the record straight about the book I am writing. I know that the New York Post piece seriously misrepresented the true nature of the book.

"The book is multifaceted, and treats the abduction phenomenon, in all of its complexity, with the sensitivity, respect and seriousness it deserves, presenting not only my own experiences, but those of other experiencers as well. I'll be examining and exploring my contact experiences in light of their transformative aspects, recognizing that the phenomenon is, and can be, an incredible catalyst for expanded self-awareness. Interaction with extraterrestrial intelligence has many aspects, of course, but the transformational aspect is fundamental to me.

"The book will tell about my reptilian encounters, a subject that very few women are prepared to go public with or speak openly about. I praise the courage of the few that already have—and endured public ridicule as a result. Reptilians are not a politically correct species in the UFO community, and to admit to having sex with one—much less enjoying it—is beyond the pale as

far as the more conservative members of that community are concerned. But I know from my extensive reading and research, and from talking personally to dozens of other women (and men) that I am not unique in reporting this kind of experience. I am the first to admit that this is a vastly complex subject, a kind of hall of mirrors, where dimensional realities are constantly shifting and changing. Certainly, the reptilians use sex to control people in various ways. They have the ability to shapeshift and to control the mind of the experiencer, as well as to give tremendous pleasure through their mental powers. I have wrestled with all of these implications and the various levels of meaning and possibilities represented by my encounter experiences. I will say, however, as I have said before, that I feel a deep respect for the reptilian entity with whom I interacted, and a profound connection with this being.

Reptilians are not a politically correct species in the UFO community, and to admit to having sex with one—much less enjoying it—is beyond the pale….

"In a past life regression I did recently, I went to a very remote period in earth's history (perhaps hundreds of thousands of years ago), and saw myself as one of a brotherhood of reptilian warriors facing a catastrophic event in which we perished together (it was possibly nuclear in nature, since I saw a red cloud and felt tremendous heat). I believe that on one level, I may be meeting these entities again, perhaps fellow warriors from the past warning us of an impending, self-inflicted doom—or perhaps they are different aspects of myself. I don't really know; I'm just trying to

unravel this puzzle like everyone else.

"Following my initial Art Bell interview, I received hundreds of letters and emails, many from people describing similar encounters to mine. I know that there are people out there who are suffering in isolation and silence, thinking they are going crazy. I have been able to give some of these people strength and courage, so that they can move through their fear and come out the other side, empowered and still able to celebrate life as the incredible adventure that it truly is. I know that when I was processing my Grey experiences, if it had not been for people like John Mack, Budd Hopkins, Kim Carlsberg, Whitley Strieber, John Carpenter, and other researchers and experiencers who have been courageous enough to come forward, putting their lives and reputations on the line, I would have stayed in fear a lot longer, cowering in a corner, my self-esteem and identity shattered. Thanks to them and to the wonderful members of my support group, I am still standing, intact and whole.

"I believe that the alien abduction experience is profoundly linked to the momentous shift in consciousness that is occurring as we enter the new millennium. We are witnesses to and participants in the most fantastic era in human history. And contrary to the mood of pessimism from some individuals regarding the way mainstream media treats the UFO phenomenon, and the trepidation that is felt regarding its ultimate impact on the human race, I am unashamedly a 'Positive.' Everywhere I turn, I find much greater public acceptance of the alien abduction/UFO phenomenon and active curiosity from enormous numbers of people. I am also encouraged by the fact that many more experiencers are coming forward, no longer hiding behind the cloak of anonymity. I believe that within ten years the reality of alien abduction will be accepted as a fact by the majority of people on this planet, and ridicule of

the subject by the media or anyone else will be regarded as naive and irresponsible.

Everywhere I turn, I find much greater public acceptance of the alien abduction/UFO phenomenon and active curiosity from enormous numbers of people.

"I think the problem that exists between ufology and the media stems from the fact that the UFO community has been so sadly wounded in the past fifty years by rejection and ridicule that it has been somewhat demoralized as a movement. It has been a long, uphill battle, with many martyrs shedding their blood along the way, but I believe that we are winning the battle for public acceptance and are closer than ever before to solving the mystery of the alien presence itself. I am looking forward to appearing on major TV talk-shows, and to bringing the message directly to the public about this phenomenon. This is a subject that must—and will—be taken seriously, even, eventually, by the likes of Leno and Letterman. I was amazed, I might add, by the number of editors in the New York publishing community who are 'believers,' and I predict that within the next few years, UFO and abduction books will routinely top the bestseller lists as the public hungers to learn more about what our encounters mean, and their implications for the human race.

"If my book is successful, everyone in the UFO community will benefit. The floodgates are about to open, and when they do, all experiencers, UFO investigators, writers and researchers will find wider acceptance for their work. The days and years ahead are going to be full of challenges and opportunities, but we need to

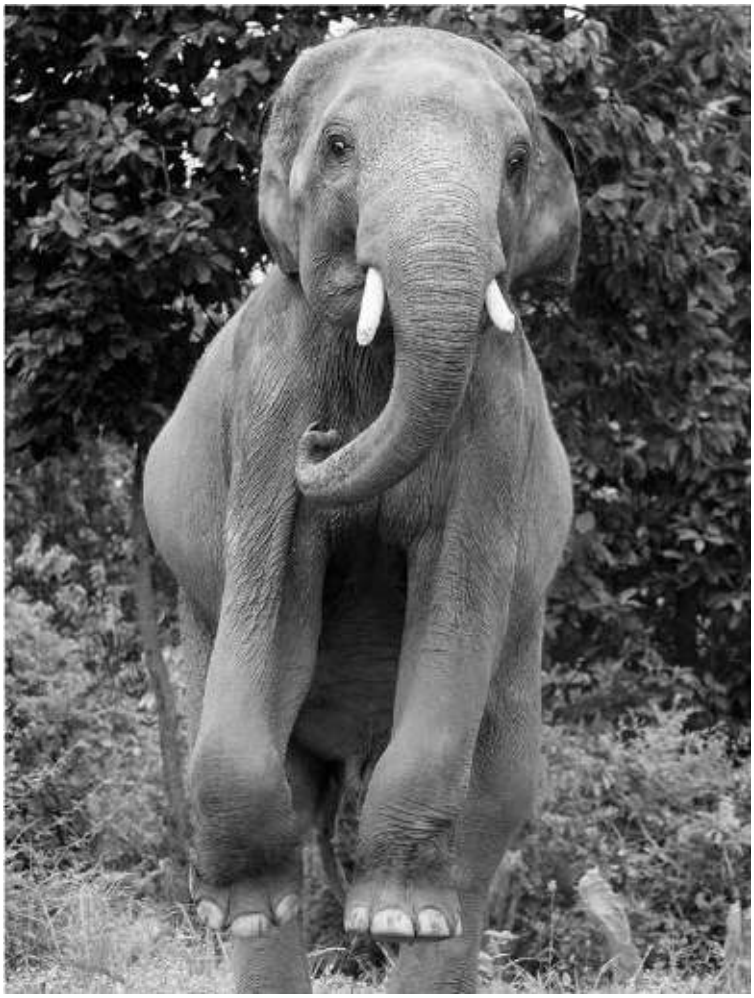
change ourselves in order to change the world. We need to work together harmoniously with mutual understanding and respect.

"I want to thank everyone who is willing to cut me some slack with regard to the article in the New York Post. I'm sure it won't be the last test of my strength or your discernment. Please keep those stones in hand until you read my book. I am confident that if and when you do, you will be able to recommend it to experiencers and non-experiencers alike. I would also like to thank everyone in the UFO community who has assisted me on my journey to awareness these past five years."

So far, Stonebrooke's book has not surfaced. Hopefully, one day, it will, and we will have a greater understanding of the Reptilian phenomenon.

Beyond any shadow of a doubt, the city of Sydney, Australia, can claim fame to having played host to one of the most mystifying and bizarre of all creatures ever encountered, one that may well fall into the Reptilian category, and I do not use those two words—mystifying and bizarre—lightly. After all, how else would you go about describing a diminutive beast that looked like an elephant but walked on its hind legs and surfaced from the depths of nothing less than the heart of a dark lagoon? That was exactly what a woman named Mabel Walsh encountered in Narrabeen—a beachside suburb of Sydney—back in the latter days of the 1960s. While driving home late one April 1968 evening with her nephew, John, Mabel Walsh was shocked to fleetingly see the approximately four-foot-tall animal emerge from the watery depths and shuffle its way into the heart of nearby scrubland. It was a creature that Walsh

would never forget, even though it was in view for only mere seconds. When you read Walsh's description, you'll instantly see why the image of the creature never left her.



The strange creature spotted near Sydney, Australia, looked like an elephant walking on its hind legs.

Grey (like an elephant) in color with what looked like a tough, leathery skin, it had a snout resembling that of an anteater, a slim trunk, long back legs, and a pair of very short forelimbs that dangled limply as it waddled along—sideways, no less—by the edge of the road before vanishing into the scrub. The local newspaper, the Daily Telegraph, recognizing the publicity that the story would surely create, splashed the details across its pages in

an article titled “And now it’s the Monster of Narrabeen!”—with the subtitle of “Loch Ness was never like this”—the details of Mabel Walsh’s amazing story tumbled out, which provoked yet more reports of the fantastic creature to surface.

Some of the subsequent accounts sounded decidedly sensationalized since they suggested that the monster of the deep had taken to dragging sheep, cows, and even horses to their horrific deaths in the heart of the lagoon, a most unlikely action for a creature that was barely four feet tall! Others spoke in near-hysterical tones of seeing a bright-red-colored, clawed hand come out of a hole in the ground at the lake and try to grab a terrified youngster. The final word on the matter went to Mabel Walsh, who started the controversy and told newspaper staff that people might call her crazy, but she was absolutely sure that a bizarre creature was lurking in Narrabeen Lakes. As it transpired, not many did call her crazy, after all. The Daily Telegraph’s audience excitedly lapped it all up, and, sales-wise, its staff was very happy indeed.

As is so very often the case when it comes to sightings of truly unusual and near-unique beasts, the account of Mabel Walsh remains as unresolved today as it was way back in April 1968. Unless, that is, you know better.

Is it possible that Hollywood’s Creature from the Black Lagoon has a reallife counterpart? Maybe not exactly a counterpart but something that is broadly similar? Just possibly, yes—as amazing as it might sound. In the late 1980s and into the 1990s, more and more people, predominantly women, reported alien-abduction encounters of a kind very different from those involving

the so-called black-eyed, large-headed "Greys" of ufology. In these cases, the experiencers reported abductions at the hands and claws of what one might consider to be the closest real-life equivalents of the beast in the aforementioned movie of 1954, Creature from the Black Lagoon.

Is it possible that Hollywood's Creature from the Black Lagoon has a real-life counter-part? Maybe not exactly a counterpart but something that is broadly similar?

In "Abduction Notes," published in the April 1993 issue of the MUFON UFO Journal, John Carpenter said: "Typically, these reptilian creatures are reported to be about six to seven feet tall, upright, with lizard-like scales, greenish to brownish in color with claw-like, four-fingered webbed hands. Their faces are said to be a cross between a human and a snake, with a central ridge coming down from the top of the head to the snout. Adding to their serpent-like appearance are their eyes which have vertical slits in their pupils and golden irises."

Some referred to them as being dinosaurlike in appearance, but the one term that really struck a chord—to the extent that it was soon adopted by both UFO researchers and conspiracy theorists alike—was Reptilians. Then was the Lizard Man of South Carolina, who exploded onto the scene in 1988 and whose exploits are chronicled in the pages of Lyle Blackburn's excellent 2013 book Lizard Man: The True Story of the Bishopville Monster. Moving on, as I noted in a recent article here at Mysterious Universe, we have the freaky "Frog-People" of Loveland, Ohio.

One breed of beast that may fall into this category but which often fails to get the attention it deserves is the Mountain Boomer of Texas. Ken Gerhard, cryptozoologist, good friend, and the author of Encounters with Flying Humanoids, says of the Mountain Boomer: "The legendary Mountain Boomers of west Texas's Big Bend National Park are purported to be gigantic, bipedal lizards that greatly resemble certain types of dinosaurs."

Ken continues: "Their name is, apparently, a reference to the thunderous sounds these monsters make when they bellow out from the distant canyons. Many old-timers from the foothills claim to know someone who has stumbled upon these menacing creatures feasting on road-kill, although the original source of these stories is often difficult to pinpoint."

As Ken also notes, the Mountain Boomers are typically described as being around five to six feet in height with green-brown skin and small front limbs that resemble arms. Ken has also uncovered a report from Montgomery County, Texas, of "a tall, dark, upright," green-colored beast that stood around seven feet tall.

Finally, we have the fascinating words of Creature from the Black Lagoon producer William Alland. He was interviewed in 1995 for Starlog magazine by Tom Weaver (in an article titled "Producer from the Black Lagoon," which Lyle Blackburn references in Lizard Man). Alland said that a famous Mexican cinematographer named Gabriel Figueroa told him of a half-human, half-fish-like animal that lived in the Amazon, which once a year "claims a maiden." Alland recognized that such a story could easily be translated into a big-screen format. The rest of it, as is so often said, is history.

Is the Creature from the Black Lagoon just a piece of old, but classic, horror fiction brought to life to thrill fans of fantasy-driven

monsters, or might it be the case that the Texas Boomers, Lizard Man, the Frog-People of Ohio, and the beast that Gabriel Figueroa had heard about are, indeed, real-world versions of one of Hollywood's most famous monsters? Real-world Reptilians.

SHUG MONKEY

Any mention of the mysterious locale that is Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk, inevitably conjures up strange and surreal images of the famous, alleged UFO landing within the forest in the latter part of December 1980—a startling event witnessed by numerous U.S. Air Force personnel stationed at a nearby military base, Royal Air Force Bentwaters. The bizarre affair has been the subject of a considerable number of books, numerous televisions shows, several investigations by military and governmental bodies, and unrelenting, deep debate. Reports of strange lights, of small, alienlike creatures seen deep within the heart of the woods, and of high-level cover-ups and sinister conspiracies are all key ingredients of the case that has, for many, justifiably become known as the "British Roswell."

More than three decades on, the events in question continue

to provoke intense debate and controversy, with some believing that extraterrestrials really did land on British soil on that fateful night or, as some believe, across the course of several nights. Others hold the view that everything can be attributed to mistaken identity (of a nearby lighthouse, no less!), while some prefer the theory that a dark and dubious military experiment, and subsequent disastrous mishap, may have been to blame for all of the fuss. More than thirty years on, the debate continues to rage, and doubtless, it will continue to rage for many more years to come. As for the forest itself, it covers an area that is around 1,500 hectares in size and can be found in Suffolk's coastal belt known as the Sandlings. It is comprised of large, coniferous trees as well as heathland and wetland areas and is home to the badger, the fox, the red deer, the roe deer, and the fallow deer. According to some people, however, Rendlesham Forest is home to far weirder things, too—maybe even a strange form of British Bigfoot.

Rendlesham Forest and the Suffolk locales of West Wratting and Balsham are reportedly home to something equally as strange—maybe even far more so—as a vehicle and creatures from another world. It is a beast that locally has come to be known as the Shug Monkey. Described as being a bizarre combination of giant dog, muscular bear, and large ape, the creature is said to take its name from either (a) an old English word—scucca—meaning "demon," which as we have seen already, also has a link to the naming of Shugborough Hall, Staffordshire, or (b) an old, East Coast term—shucky—that translates into modern-day terminology as "hairy" or "shaggy." Maybe the name is even borne out of a curious melding of both terms. Whatever the true nature of the name applied to the foul, hairy entity is, its presence in the woods of Suffolk is enough to strike deep terror into the hearts of those souls unfortunate enough to have crossed its path—to which Sam

Holland can most definitely attest.

Shortly after New Year's Day in 1956, Holland was walking through the Suffolk countryside with his spaniel dog, Harry, when he was horrified to see a bizarre-looking creature come looming out of the trees some forty feet in front of him. It walked upon four huge, muscular legs—"like a lion's"—and its thick fur coat was both black and glossy. Incredibly, said Holland, the animal was easily ten feet in length, so it could not be considered anything even remotely resembling a domestic animal or a known wild beast of the British Isles.

Holland, in a panicked state, thought for a moment that perhaps the animal was an exotic big cat that had escaped from a zoo or private estate until it turned in his direction and he was finally able to see its terrible, frowning face. Likening it to that of nothing less than a silverback gorilla, Holland said that the monstrous creature possessed a huge neck, intelligent-looking eyes, widely flaring nostrils, and immense, powerful jaws of a bone-crushing nature. For a moment or two, the animal looked intently at Holland and his whimpering, little dog. Then, seemingly having lost any and all interest in the pair, the gorilla-faced nightmare simply continued on its way and into the depths of the surrounding undergrowth. Holland would later explain that the creature looked like a strange combination of ape, dog, bear, lion, and rhinoceros: an absolute chimera of the highest order, one might be very inclined to say.

Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk, England, is the tromping grounds of the Shug Monkey, a combination of bear, ape, and dog.

Needless to say, the British Isles are not home to any such animal that even remotely resembles the beast that Sam Holland says he stumbled upon all those years ago. In fact, it's fair to say that nowhere on the entire planet does such a creature dwell—yet, Holland is adamant that his description of the monstrous entity and his recollections of the day in question are utterly accurate in each and every respect. Today, now well into his eighties and still spritely and fit, Holland believes that whatever the true nature of the beast he had the distinct misfortune to run into more than half a century ago, it was unquestionably paranormal rather than physical in origin but from where, precisely, he admittedly has no idea whatsoever.

Director of the Centre for Fortean Zoology and editor of its journal, Animals and Men, Jonathan Downes managed to track down and briefly encounter the Shug Monkey.

Jon Downes—who runs the U.K.-based Centre for Fortean Zoology—has a tantalizing tale to tell, too, of Rendlesham Forest's most monstrous inhabitant, the Shug Monkey: "An ex-girlfriend of mine—an East Anglian paranormal researcher—was in possession of some videotape which showed the paw print of some huge animal like that of a cat or a dog, but far bigger and with strange flattened finger nails rather than claws. She thought that it was a print from an alien big cat of some description, but my immediate thought was of the semi-mystical 'Shug Monkey.' When I later found that my friend and colleague, Jan Scarff, who was brought up in the vicinity of the air bases, also knew about the so-called 'Shug Monkey' I became even more interested, and I have been collecting reports for some years."

In March 2009, according to some, the Shug Monkey returned

to its old, wooded stomping grounds. One of the witnesses, Jenny Pearce, said of her encounter with the creature of the forest during that month: "I was on the green at Rendlesham Forest having a picnic with my three-year-old son and his friend's family. After the picnic we stayed to play and explore the woods. While we were in the forest I saw a large animal moving through the trees ahead. I thought it was a big dog, so I picked up my son because he has never really got into dogs and gets easily scared. But as it continued away from us it was clearly not a dog. It was much bigger and there wasn't anyone there to be walking it if it was a large dog."

It is truly ironic that many of those who are skeptical of the Rendlesham Forest UFO case of December 1980 are often keen to suggest that the airmen who were involved merely mistook the illumination from the nearby Orford Lighthouse for something more exotic. Why? Well, Orford itself is a veritable hotbed of weirdness and strange creatures of a wild-man variety. Consider, for example, the following account of one Ralph, a monk and an abbot at Coggeshall, Essex. Recorded in the year 1200 in Chronicon Anglicanum, it describes the remarkable capture in the area of a wild man of the woods-style creature:

"In the time of King Henry II, when Bartholomew de Glanville was in charge of the castle at Orford, it happened that some fishermen fishing in the sea there caught in their nets a Wildman. He was naked and was like a man in all his members, covered with hair and with a long shaggy beard. He eagerly ate whatever was brought to him, but if it was raw he pressed it between his hands until all the juice was expelled. He would not

talk, even when tortured and hung up by his feet, Brought into church, he showed no sign of reverence or belief. He sought his bed at sunset and always remained there until sunrise. He was allowed to go into the sea, strongly guarded with three lines of nets, but he dived under the nets and came again and again. Eventually he came back of his own free will. But later on he escaped and was never seen again."

The wild man quickly scooped up the rabbit, bounded off into the grass, and was lost from sight.

Maybe it—or, far more likely, given the large passage of time, one of its offspring—was seen again, albeit hundreds of years later. At some point during the summer of 1968, Morris Allen was walking along the coast near, of all places, the town of Orford when, in the distance, he saw someone squatting on the sand and leaning over something. As he got closer, Morris said, he could see that the man was dressed in what looked like an animal skin and was tearing into the flesh of a dead rabbit. The man was dirt encrusted, with long, tangled hair, and had wild, staring eyes. Morris could only watch with a mixture of fascination and horror.

Suddenly, the man held his head aloft and quickly looked in Morris's direction, as if he had picked up his scent. The wild man quickly scooped up the rabbit, bounded off into the grass, and was lost from sight. For Morris Allen, however, it was an event never forgotten. Perhaps, the wild men and Shug Monkeys of Rendlesham Forest and its surrounding areas live on, taunting and tantalizing us with the occasional sighting of their bestial forms.

In August 1997, the sighting of a strange creature—which

became known as the Fiskerton Phantom—terrified four young girls, who were enjoying a holiday walk near the Lincolnshire village. Although many talked of the beast being a big cat of some sort, the consensus on the part of the girls—Rachel Rowan, 12; Nicki Handley, 11; Nicola Proctor, 9; and Joanna Brogan, 10—was that it was far more bearlike. Notably, catlike and bearlike were descriptions used by Sam Holland in relation to the beast he came face to face with in Rendlesham Forest back in the 1950s.

One of the girls told the press: "We saw something moving, so we went to take a look. When we saw what it was we just froze. It was very frightening. It looked like it was eating a pheasant. It had some very big teeth and great big claws. After a few seconds we ran off, but later when we went back to see if it was still there it had gone. It had left some big paw prints though."

At the time, the girls were staying at a caravan park situated adjacent to the Tyrwhitt Arms pub at Short Ferry, which is near Fiskerton, and in states of near-hysteria, the girls raced to the pub for help. The manager of the Tyrwhitt Arms, Dave Brumhead, spoke out as follows: "There was no way this was a schoolgirls' prank; they were really shocked. We had another sighting that evening near to where the girls had been. A motorist stopped his car in the middle of the road after he thought he had seen something. It's all very strange."

While many might assume that the Shug Monkey was—and still is—an unknown kind of ape that has existed in stealth for millennia (which is highly unlikely), the fact is that the creature is inextricably tied to Rendlesham Forest, which, as we have seen,

was the site of the United Kingdom's most famous UFO event. Just like Bigfoot in the United States, we see evidence that points in the direction of the Shug Monkey being an alien entity, but how might such an extraterrestrial creature so skillfully appear and disappear on multiple occasions? It may be that this alien creature can jump from one reality to another. We're talking about portals and multiple dimensions. Author Ronan Coghlan has dug deeply into this issue. Coghlan is the author of a number of acclaimed books, including A Dictionary of Cryptozoology and—with Gary Cunningham—The Mystery Animals of Ireland. In a 2012 interview with me, Ronan provided his views on the nature of the British Bigfoot and what he believes may be evidence of a link between the phenomenon and that of UFOs. He says:

"The idea that there is a viable, reproducing population of apes or humanoids in Britain is totally risible; it just couldn't be. So, alternative explanations for their presence are to be sought. A lot of the British reports seem to be quite authentic. So, there probably are actual beasts or humanoids out there. And the question is: How did they arrive there in the first place? It's now becoming acceptable in physics to say there are alternative universes.

"The main pioneer of this is Professor Michio Kaku, of the City College of New York. He has suggested that not only are there alternate universes, but when ours is about to go out in a couple of billion years, we might have the science to migrate to a more congenial one that isn't going to go out. I think he expects science to keep improving for countless millennia, which is very optimistic of him, but whatever one thinks about that, the idea of alternative universes is now gaining an acceptance among physicists, and he's the name to cite in this area.

Theoretical theorist and science popularizer Dr. Michio Kaku has suggested that in the distant future humans could advance so far technologically as to be able to transport our species to another universe.

"Now, how do you get into, or out of, alternative universes? Well, the answer is quite simple: You have heard of wormholes, I'm sure? No one has ever seen a wormhole, I hasten to add. They are hypothetical, but mainstream physicists say they could be there, and there's one particular type called the Lorentzian Traversable Wormhole. Physicists admit there is a possibility that this exists, and it would be like a shortcut, from one universe to another. Thus, for example, it's rather like a portal: Something from the other universe would come through it. Or, something from another planet could come through it. If there are any of these wormholes on Earth, it would be quite easy for anything to come through, and it's quite possible any number of anomalous creatures could find

their way through from time to time. You remember John Keel and his window-areas? That would tend to indicate there's a wormhole in the vicinity, such as Point Pleasant, West Virginia, where the Mothman was seen.

"I have the distinct suspicion we are dealing with window-areas that either contact some other planet, or they contact another universe. My money is on the other universe, rather than the other planet, to be honest with you. Either a shortcut through time, or a shortcut through space, is recognized as possible these days. This is kind of cutting-edge physics, as it were. Now, the other one isn't cutting-edge physics at all. It's my own little theory. I think, looking at a great many legends, folktales, and things of that nature, it is possible to vibrate at different rates. And if you vibrate at a different rate, you are not seen. You are not tangible. And, then, when your vibration changes, you are seen, and you are tangible; maybe that this has something to do with Bigfoot appearing and disappearing in a strange fashion.

"And, finally, on the question of UFOs: Quite a large number of Bigfoot-type creatures have been seen in the vicinity of UFOs. I'm not saying there's necessarily a connection between the two, but they do—quite often—turn up in the same areas. Now, if UFOs travel by wormholes, and if Bigfoot does the same, that might allow for a connection between the two. They might not be mutually exclusive."

SPACE BROTHERS

Very few people—regardless of their religious persuasions or otherwise—have not heard of the Ten Commandments. Also referred to as the Decalogue, they are, essentially, purported to be strict laws prepared by the Christian god, laws designed to ensure that humanity follows a good and righteous path. They were laid down on a pair of stone tablets that were given to Moses at Mount Sinai—Moses being an Egyptian prince-turned-prophet and religious leader.

It's notable that midway through the twentieth century, a number of people who claimed contact with very humanlike extraterrestrials had experiences that eerily paralleled the story of Moses receiving the commandments at Mount Sinai. Before we get to the matter of ancient aliens, however, let's take a look at the story behind the Ten Commandments.

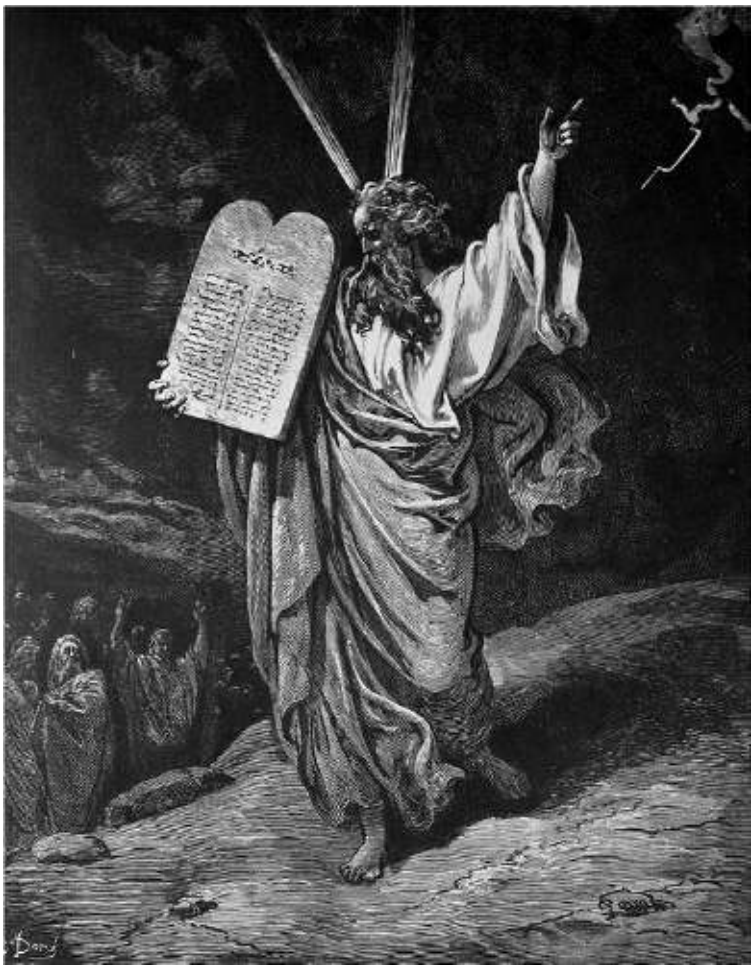
The story of the Ten Commandments appears twice in the pages of the Bible in Exodus and Deuteronomy. It commences with the Israelites (variously referred to as the Sons of Israel or the Children of Israel) reaching Mount Sinai. Also known as Mount Horeb, Mount Sinai stands at approximately 7,500 feet in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, which is located between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. However, much debate goes on regarding whether or not this particular Mount Sinai and the Mount Sinai of the Old Testament are one and the same.

It's to Exodus 19 we have to turn our specific attentions since this is when, for all intents and purposes, the story begins. Approximately seventy-two hours after Moses and the Israelites arrived at the foot of the legendary mount, something strange and extraordinary occurred. The air was filled with huge flashings of lightning, and thunder crashed loudly and wildly. What was described as a "thick cloud" descended upon Mount Sinai, and the "voice of the trumpet" echoed throughout the vicinity. The people gathered together, wondering what might happen next.

We are told that "the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai," after which Moses had a short communication with God. On his return to the base of the mount, Moses told the Israelites that something amazing would soon happen. As far as the people were concerned, however, it was terror rather than amazement that took hold of their minds. That much became evident when, as if in unison, they moved far away from Mount Sinai, fearful of what might happen. Moses, seeing dissent among the people, quickly reassured them that all was well. "Fear not" were his famous words to the multitude. The Old Testament states that following his reassurances, Moses walked toward that somewhat ominous "thick cloud"—or "thick darkness," as it was also termed—and listened carefully as the voice of God boomed and proceeded to lay down

the law.

The following morning, Moses, along with Aaron—the high priest of Israel—and his sons, Nadab and Abihu, climbed Mount Sinai. They "saw the God of Israel" hovering above what was described as a "paved work" of sapphire. God bellowed, as only a god surely can: "Come up to me into the mount, and be there … I will give thee tablets of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them."



The descriptions in the Old Testament regarding what Moses and his followers saw at Mount Sinai could be interpreted as an encounter with alien technology rather than God.

For no fewer than six days, so the story goes, Mount Sinai

was covered by that mysterious "thick cloud." Then, on day number seven, Moses entered the cloud and remained "in the mount forty days and forty nights."

While Moses was gone, the Children of Israel reportedly decided to take matters into their own hands, which basically meant that Aaron created a deity in the form of a golden calf and "built an altar before it." Wild partying, orgies, the drinking of lots of alcohol, and worshipping the golden calf were the name of the game—at least, until Moses returned, at which point all Hell broke loose—if you will pardon the pun. Moses had brought with him a pair of stone tablets that contained the Ten Commandments. Such was his anger at the way in which the Israelites had rebelled in his absence, Moses smashed the tablets on the ground.

The matter of the flashing and booming in the sky … and the disembodied voice of God have all led to theories that what Moses actually encountered were extraterrestrials.…

God, fortunately, saw that Moses's actions were aimed at his people, not at God himself. The result, God ordered Moses: "Hew thee two tablets of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tablets the words that were in the first tablets, which thou brakest."

The Old Testament states of this: "And he wrote on the tablets, according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the LORD spake unto you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me."

The golden calf was destroyed, the Ten Commandments became the law of the land, the two tablets found their way into the Ark of the Covenant (about which more will be said very soon), and the rest—as the saying goes—is history. With that all said, it's now time to look at the Ten Commandments. They are as follows:

- You shall have no other gods before Me.
- You shall not make idols.
- You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
- Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
- Honor your father and your mother.
- You shall not murder.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- You shall not covet.

The story of the Ten Commandments is one that millions of people believe to be the gospel truth. However, an issue needs to be addressed that places the story of the Ten Commandments into a very different context: namely, the context of the UFO controversy.

The matter of the flashing and booming in the sky, that curious "thick cloud" (or "thick darkness") that suddenly appeared as if out of nowhere, and the disembodied voice of God have all led to theories that what Moses actually encountered were extraterrestrials aboard a huge, dark-colored spacecraft who wished to try to civilize the human race by indoctrinating it with a

rigid, alien system of rules, regulations, and laws.

While many people of a deeply religious persuasion might be angered at such a scenario even being suggested, the fact is that more than a few UFO encounters have uncannily similar parallels with the biblical version of what happened across that forty-day period at Mount Sinai.

We will start with the man who absolutely typified the UFO scene in 1950s America: George Adamski. Born in Poland in 1891, Adamski moved to the United States with his parents when he was just a child. He spent four years in the military—at the height of the First World War—then spent time working, variously, in a flour mill and at Yellowstone National Park. It was during the 1930s, however, that Adamski began to gravitate toward the world of the unknown, of the paranormal, and, finally, of the flying saucer. Adamski received significant publicity in early 1934 when the Los Angeles Times newspaper profiled him in its pages. The article told of Adamski's relocation to California. Interestingly, the newspaper took particular note of Adamski's words that revolved around a trek he made to the Himalayas. Rather notably, Adamski —while high in the mountains—had an experience that mirrored Moses's moment of enlightenment on Mount Sinai.

The Los Angeles Times's article noted: "The ten-foot trumpets of far away Lhasa, perched among perpetual snows in the Himalayan Mountains in Tibet, will shortly have their echo on the sedate hills of Southern California's Laguna Beach. Already the Royal Order of Tibet has acquired acreage on the placid hills that bathe their Sunkist feet in the purling Pacific and before long, the

walls, temples, turrets and dungeons of a Lama monastery will serrate the skyline. It will be the first Tibetan monastery in America and in course of time, the trained disciples of the cult will filter through its glittering gates to spread 'the ancient truths' among all who care to listen. [The] central figure in the new movement is Prof. George Adamski."

Adamski retreated to Mount Palomar in California in the 1940s, and while there once again encountered his UFO friends.

Perhaps echoing the kind of transformation Moses went through, Adamski told the newspaper: "I learned great truths up there on the roof of the world, or, rather, the trick of applying age old knowledge to daily life, to cure the body and the mind and to win mastery over self and soul. I do not bring to Laguna the weird rites and bestial superstition in which the old Lamaism is steeped, but the scientific portions of the religion."

Adamski wasn't long for Laguna Beach, however. He soon

had another base of operations: Palomar Gardens, located near California's Mount Palomar. As for the important matter of earning money, Adamski established the Palomar Gardens Café. It was in 1946 that Adamski and the intelligences behind the UFO phenomenon crossed paths in legendary fashion. In early October of that year, Adamski and several of his friends and followers encountered a gigantic, unidentified flying object in the skies near the mountain, one that was long and pencil shaped. A similar craft —or, perhaps, the very same one—appeared in the following year, 1947, and yet again at the site of the huge mountain. It was 1952, however, that really thrust Adamski into the ufological world big-time.

Greg Bishop, who has carefully studied the life and ufological claims of Adamski, tells the story of what happened: "Adamski left his Palomar mountain retreat at 1:00 A.M. on Thursday November 20, 1952 along with his lifetime secretary Lucy McGinnis and Alice Wells—the owner of the property where Adamski gave lectures on Universal Law and the café where he flipped burgers to pay the rent. At about 8:00 A.M. they met with Al Bailey and his wife Betty, and George Hunt Williamson [a fellow Contactee, about whom we will learn more imminently] and his wife, Betty, in Blythe [California], just west of the Arizona/California border."

The group then suddenly turned back on what was described as a "hunch." They retraced their steps, taking a small highway eleven miles northeast toward the town of Parker, Arizona, where they stopped. After breakfast, the group scanned the skies for saucers. Passing motorists slowed down, wondering what was going on. When, around noon, an aircraft flew over the group, it

provoked brief excitement. The main event was still to come, however. In fact, it was only moments away: a huge, silver-colored, cigar-shaped UFO suddenly loomed into view.

Greg Bishop says: "Williamson understatedly asked: 'Is that a space ship?,' as Betty Bailey tried to set up a movie camera, but couldn't because 'she was so excited.' According to Adamski, they were anxious not to attract attention to the object, so they didn't point at it and alert other passing cars to this event."

"Someone take me down the road, quick! That ship has come looking for me and I don't want to keep them waiting!" Adamski yelled as he jumped into the car with McGinnis and Mr. Bailey. About half a mile down the road with the craft shadowing them, Adamski told McGinnis to turn off the road. He then instructed the two to "go back to the others as quickly as possible … and watch for anything that might take place"—from the safe viewing distance of half a mile or more away. After this first craft was chased away by interceptor jets, another "beautiful small craft" arrived and landed behind the crest of a mountain about half a mile away.

Adamski soon saw a figure waving to him and walked toward it. Adamski said of this experience, "I fully realized I was in the presence of a man from space—a human being from another world!" The entity identified himself as Orthon and claimed to come from the planet Venus. After some warnings about atomic weapons and wars and a refusal to be photographed, Orthon returned to his ship and sailed away.

After some warnings about atomic weapons and wars and a refusal to be photographed, Orthon returned

to his ship and sailed away.

Greg Bishop adds: "Adamski waved to his companions to approach, which they did soon after. Conveniently enough Williamson had brought along some plaster-of-paris and proceeded to make casts of the footprints the Venusian had left in the desert floor. According to Williamson … he was 'the first to arrive at the footprints after the contact had been made. I could see where the space being had scraped away the topsoil in order to get more moist sand that would take the impressions from the carvings on the bottom of his shoes. The carvings on the shoes must have been finely done for the impressions in the sand were clear cut. Either Orthon had a weight problem on Earth, or someone had taken extra care in making the impressions.'"

Greg Bishop then notes something that, again, has a parallel with the saga of the Ten Commandments. He says that Adamski "goes on to state his interpretation of what meaning the symbols hold for those who 'fail to obey the laws of the Infinite Father.' Williamson also stresses that the designs are not 'alien,' since the Earth is 'part of the Great Totality' and ancient symbols of Earth are the symbols of the space beings as well … after this event Williamson seemed to have found his calling, and concentrated on turning out his own brand of Contactee literature—most of it 'channeled'—leaving clear the nuts-and-bolts domain to his friend and inspiration, the other George—Adamski."

The fact that Adamski had set up his organization on a mountain, that he had several profound UFO encounters on that very same mountain, and that all of this culminated in a statement that offered warnings to those who failed to "obey the laws of the Infinite Father" is a clear demonstration of the undeniable parallels

between the story of the Ten Commandments and the saga of the most famous, so-called "Contactee" of all. Adamski's Moses-like experiences were not alone, however—others experienced deeply similar encounters.

As discussed in the earlier chapter "Captain Aura Rhanes," Truman Bethurum encountered aliens from a planet called Clarion. The Clarionites imparted a great deal of data about their home world, their religion, and their belief in an all-powerful deity, they did something else, too, something that those of a Christian persuasion will find all too familiar: they provided Bethurum with a gold plate that outlined the laws of the space people. Yet again, we have a prime example of someone taking a walk into the mountains, communing with superior entities, and being given a priceless artifact that detailed the rules and regulations of those same superior beings. In that sense, very little difference exists between Moses's trek up Mount Sinai—where he communed with God and received the Ten Commandments inscribed on two stone tablets—and Truman Bethurum heading up Mormon Mesa and being given a golden platter courtesy of human-looking extraterrestrials who wished to share their laws with the human race.

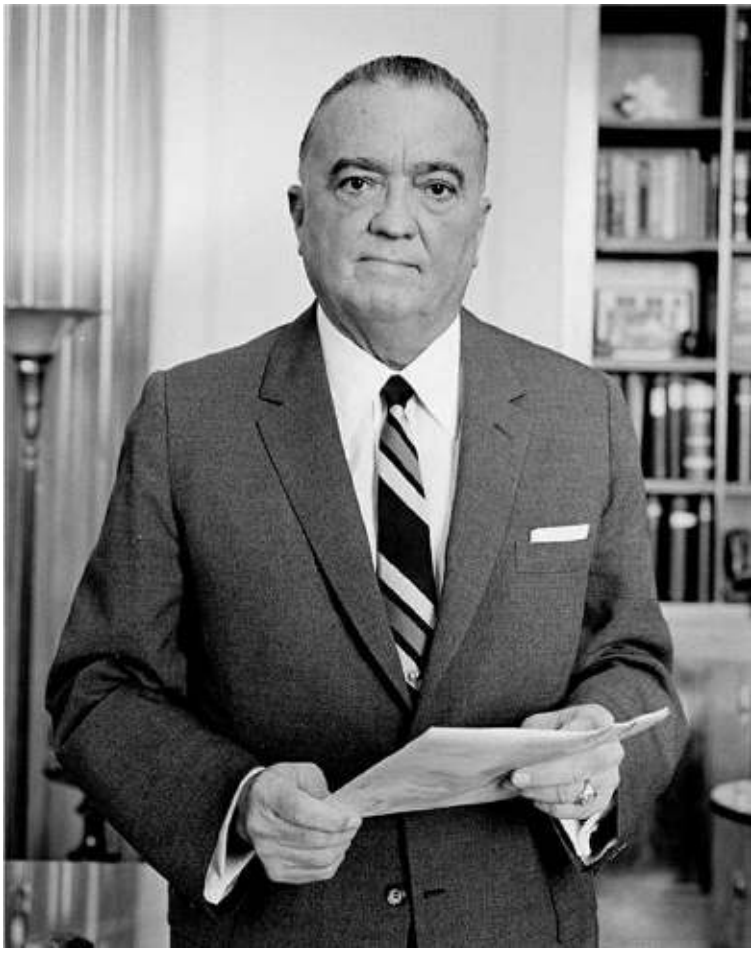
George Van Tassel built the Integraton in Landers, California, as a place ideally designed to teach the body rejuvenation techniques he learned from visitors from Venus.

Another parallel existed, too: in the same way that the God of the Old Testament is portrayed very much as a ruthless, coldhearted deity, so, too, the Clarionites were described as somewhat fascist, bullying types who insisted that Bethurum help them spread their word—or else. The wrath of God versus the wrath of extraterrestrials: they're really not that much different.

Then there is a certain George Van Tassel, who claimed interaction with aliens out in the harsh, roasting desert near Joshua Tree, California, in the early 1950s. Just like the extraterrestrials who both George Adamski and Truman Bethurum claimed to have encountered in the very same time frame, Van Tassel's visitors from the stars were (a) extremely humanlike and (b) highly demanding when it came to getting across their space laws and regulations. At the time of the encounters, Van Tassel was living in

the desert region of a small town called Landers—actually in a large, converted cave beneath a gigantic rock that, locally and unsurprisingly, was given the name of Giant Rock.

Van Tassel claimed the aliens told him that the human race had been molded, guided, and manipulated for thousands of years by extraterrestrials who posed as gods. In that sense, God was nothing more than a fabrication, one that was created to ensure that the people of Earth adhered to the word of the space aliens. Such was the fascination that the public had with his claims, Van Tassel was prompted to establish a yearly UFO conference at Giant Rock that—at its height in the mid-1950s—attracted audiences in excess of ten thousand. The "word" was spreading. It even reached the FBI.



FBI director J. Edgar Hoover was also keenly interested in the activities of Van Tassel.

Documentation declassified by the FBI demonstrates that Van Tassel was of keen interest to J. Edgar Hoover and his G-Men, as were Van Tassel's statements concerning ancient aliens and the saga of the Ten Commandments. An FBI report on a lecture Van Tassel gave in Denver, Colorado, in 1960 states the following: "The major part of his lecture was devoted to explaining the occurrences in the Bible as they related to the space people. He said that the only mention of God in the Bible is in the beginning when the universe was being made. He said that after that all references are to 'out of the sky' or 'out of heaven.'

"He said that this is due to the fact that man, space people, was made by God [sic] and that in the beginning of the world the space people came to the earth and left animals here. These were the prehistoric animals which existed at a body temperature of 105 degrees; however a polar tilt occurred whereby the poles shifted and the tropical climates became covered with ice and vice versa.

"After the polar tilt the temperature to sustain life was 98.6 degrees, which was suitable for space people, so they established a colony and left only males here, intending to bring females at a latter date on supply ships. This is reflected in Adam not having a wife. He said that Adam was not an individual but a race of men.

"[Van Tassel] said that this race then inter-married with 'intelligent, upright walking animals,' which race was EVE [sic]. Then when the space people came back in the supply ships they saw what had happened and did not land but ever since due to the

origin of ADAM, they have watched over the people on Earth.

"He said that this is in the Bible many times, such as MOSES receiving the Ten Commandments. He said the Ten Commandments are the laws of the space people and men on earth only give them lip service [italics mine]. Also, the manna from heaven was bread supplied by the space people.

According to Van Tassel, the Virgin Mary "was a space person sent here already pregnant in order to show the earth people the proper way to

live."

"He also stated that this can be seen from the native stories such as the Indians in America saying that corn and potatoes, unknown in Europe, were brought here by a 'flaming canoe.' He said that this can be shown also by the old stories of Winged Chariots and Winged white Horses, which came from out of the sky.

"He said that JESUS was born of MARY, who was a space person sent here already pregnant in order to show the earth people the proper way to live. He said the space people have watched over us through the years and have tried to help us. He said they have sent their agents to the earth and they appear just as we do; however, they have the power to know your thoughts just as JESUS did. He said this is their means of communication and many of the space people are mute, but they train a certain number of them to speak earth languages."

While those who interpret the Bible literally will doubtless balk at the claims of George Van Tassel, Truman Bethurum, and George Adamski, the fact is that all three men told stories that paralleled the biblical saga of the events at Mount Sinai to near-identical degrees.

Someone, or something, has for thousands of years attempted to enforce its rules and regulations on the human race. Whether it's God, a god, or all-powerful aliens from a far-off star system very much depends on one's personal belief system—which is the way things have always been and, likely, always will be.

On February 25, 2009, a legendary figure within the contactee

field—Howard Menger—passed away at his Vero Beach, Florida, home at the ripe old age of eighty-seven. As contactee authority Greg Bishop notes, Menger was quite a character, one who had a particular penchant for women of the allegedly nonhuman kind: "At the age of nineteen, Menger enlisted in the Army and saw service in the Pacific during WWII in a flamethrower unit flushing the Japanese out of caves and other hideouts," says Bishop. "He was wounded and received the Purple Heart. Returning to his native New Jersey in 1946, Menger started a sign painting business and a family."

Bishop adds: "This changed in 1956, when he appeared on the Long John Nebel radio show, along with Contactee George Van Tassel. He talked about contacts with space brothers—and, more specifically, sisters—who appeared to him, beginning when he was ten years old. Some of his later published descriptions sounded distinctly sexual in nature, although he carefully couched them in language that could be construed as platonic. He also started taking pictures of the space people and their ships, although most who saw the photos say that they are quite indistinct. On August 4th of 1956, Menger said he was invited on board one of the flying saucers. The next month he said that the space people took him for a joyride where he saw alien civilizations on other planets and structures on the Moon."

It was not long before a major development occurred in Menger's life, says Bishop: "Later that year, an attractive young woman named Connie Weber appeared at one of Menger's gatherings. He thought that she was the reincarnation of a blond spacewoman that he had known—in the biblical sense—in a previous life on Venus. He soon left his first wife and family to begin a new life of lectures and touring on the Contactee circuit. From Outer Space to You, Menger's 1959 entry into the Contactee

fray, made him a regular at Van Tassel's annual spacecraft conventions in Southern California. Connie wrote a book entitled My Saturnian Lover about her previous interplanetary relationship with Menger."

As Bishop notes, a dramatic development was looming on the horizon: "In 1960, Menger appeared on a TV show with Nebel and basically recanted his entire story. He later said that he was involved in some sort of Army test of public reaction to possible alien contact. Fortean writer Ivan Sanderson arrived at the Menger residence in the late 1950s and claimed that Menger got very angry with him when Sanderson discovered some equipment and crates in a storage area with 'U.S. Army' stenciled on them."

Bishop explains: "After this, Menger retired from the public eye and worked on electronic devices he said were designed to harness free-energy and allow mankind to build their own flying saucers. He received no widespread publicity for these inventions. Jim Moseley recalled that Menger attended a UFO convention in the 1970s and 'blew out all the fuses in the hotel' with one of his contraptions."

Bishop concludes: "Despite the claims and controversy, Howard and Connie Menger seemed to be genuinely in love with each other and apparently raised a reasonably happy family. If nothing else, Menger will be remembered as a unique personality who tried to leave a positive message as his legacy."

No study of claims of the Space Brothers would be complete without mention of the late-1950s claims of the late Frank Stranges, founder and former president of the National

Investigations Committee on UFOs and president of the International Evangelical Crusades and the International Theological Seminary of California. Greg Bishop says: "Stranges's most lasting legacy may be his narrative in [his 2001 book] The Stranger at the Pentagon, the story of Venusian Captain 'Valiant Thor.' According to Stranges, after Val had met with the president and members of the Joint Chiefs [allegedly in the Pentagon on March 16, 1957], he had a meeting with Stranges at the Pentagon. Val Thor sounded (and looked) like Michael Rennie's portrayal of the ufonaut Klaatu in The Day the Earth Stood Still."

Stranges recalled: "Being a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as well as a student of the Bible for many years, coupled with my experience as an special investigator, I felt as though my senses were functioning properly and that I knew exactly what I was about to do. I was on my guard for fakes and frauds. In walked a man, about six feet tall, perhaps 185 pounds, brown wavy hair, brown eyes. His complexion appeared normal and slightly tanned. As I approached him, and he looked at me, it was as though he looked straight through me. With a warm smile and extending his hand, he greeted me by name.

Klaatu, the alien played by Michael Rennie in 1951's The Day the Earth Stood Still, looked a lot like descriptions of the alien Valiant Thor from Venus.

"His genuineness astonished me, but quickly I understood. As I gripped his hand, I was somewhat surprised to feel the soft texture of his skin … like that of a baby but with the strength of a man that silently testified to his power and intensity."

Stranges elaborated: "He told me that his purpose in coming was to help mankind return to the Lord. He spoke in positive terms … always with a smile on his face. He said that man was further away from God than ever before, but there was still a good chance if man looks in the right place. He told me he had been here nearly three years and would depart in just a few months.

"Claiming that he would not use force to speak with men in authority in America, he was happy to consult with them at their invitation. He further stated that thus far only a few men in Washington knew of his existence in the Pentagon. And few leaders had availed themselves of his advice during these past

three years.

"He felt there was still so much to do and yet his time of departure was getting near. He told me that Jesus Christ would not force men to be saved from their mistakes, even though He had already made a way for mankind to be redeemed through His shed blood. When I asked him where he was from, he replied, 'I am from the Planet that is called Venus.'

"I asked him how many visitors from Venus were presently on Earth and he said, 'There are presently seventy-seven of us walking among you in the United States. We are constantly coming and going.'"

Interestingly, in the wake of Stranges's death in 2008, a Freedom of Information request filed by this author disclosed the existence of an FBI file on Stranges that detailed extensive Bureau knowledge of his controversial claims. According to FBI memoranda dated May 3, 1962, Richard Hall, the then-secretary of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP) who died in July 2009, had written to the FBI with the intention of relating some illuminating data. The FBI noted in its "Stranges File": "[Hall] wrote April 27th enclosing information concerning Dr. Frank E. Stranges who has implied he was associated with the FBI. Hall stated that in addition to the information he was providing, they would be glad to make other material in their files available to the FBI. A review of the enclosed material indicates that the allegations against Dr. Stranges pertain to a period in August and October, 1960."

The FBI continued: "In October, 1960, the Seattle Office conducted an investigation concerning Dr. Stranges after information was received that he was implying that he was at that time or previously connected with the FBI. During the investigation no one was located who had actually heard Dr.

Stranges make any such allegation, although it was generally conceded that he had left a number of people with such an in impression."

The FBI concluded: "Dr. Stranges is an evangelist. Based on his background, numerous addresses and organizations which he has had and the fact that he claims to have talked to an individual from the planet Venus, it appears he may also be something of a confidence man."

We may never know for sure whether or not Frank Stranges's tales were true, but the final word on this matter goes to Greg Bishop: "Other Contactees met their space brothers in deserts, along deserted highways, and in coffee shops. Frank Stranges met Val Thor in the hallowed halls of military power, making him the only Contactee to be able to claim the imprimatur of officialdom."

As Schirmer watched, the thing began to ascend, shooting flames accompanied by a "siren-like" sound.

Moving on, Bishop reveals: "Early on the morning of December 3rd, 1967, patrolman Herbert Schirmer was making his rounds near Ashland, Nebraska. He saw what he thought was a truck disabled near the side of the road. As he neared the object and switched on his high-beams, Schirmer realized that it was no truck. An oval object with red lights shining from inside was hovering about eight feet from the ground. As Schirmer watched, the thing began to ascend, shooting flames accompanied by a 'siren-like' sound. It passed a few feet over the patrol car and was lost from sight in a few seconds.

“The incident seemed to last about ten minutes, but when Schirmer returned to the police station to write up his report, he found that he could not account for almost an hour of time. His entry in the logbook simply stated ‘Saw a flying saucer at the junction of highways 6 and 63, believe it or not!’

“[Schirmer] was brought to Boulder, Colorado to undergo regressive hypnosis with psychologist Dr. Leo Sprinkle. During the session, it was revealed that after he first came upon the UFO, Schirmer had been approached by three human-looking beings between 4.5 and 5 feet in height. He later drew a picture of the one he took to be the ‘leader.’ The being addressed him, asking ‘Are you the watchman of this place?’ Schirmer said ‘sure,’ and after assurances that he wouldn’t shoot at the ship, they took him on a short tour of the interior. The Ufonauts all wore tight-fitting uniforms with fabric that covered their heads. On the right breast of their clothing, there was a patch or embroidery depicting a winged serpent.

“Schirmer was later promoted to chief of police for Ashland, but had to quit after personal, psychological and marital problems ruined his concentration. He was haunted by the experience for years afterwards.”

Bishop concludes with an interesting observation: “The thing that makes this case a significant one for me is [that] during the course of the regressions, Schirmer said that the one being he talked to left him with this admonition: ‘We want you to believe in us, but not too much.’”

Was, perhaps, this slightly enigmatic and puzzling statement an indication that humanlike aliens were indeed trying to get some form of message across to the human race but were concerned about announcing their presence on a planetwide scale and, consequently, preferred to do so at a restricted level and only to

small bodies of people in isolated settings? Sadly, more than four decades on, we may never really know.

During the early hours of October 28, 1973, Dionisio Llanca, a truck driver, was negotiating Highway 3 near Bahia Blanca—a city located southwest of the province of Buenos Aires, Argentina—when he was forced to stop his truck, which for several hours had been suffering from a slow tire puncture. As he began to jack up the truck to change its tire, Llanca was suddenly enveloped in a yellow beam of light that emanated from a flying saucer-shaped object hovering some fifteen to twenty feet from the ground. Semiparalyzed by the light beam, Llanca was amazed to see behind him three humanoids, all of whom were staring at him intently.

All three, two men and one woman, were about five-foot-six in height and wore tight-fitting, gray, one-piece outfits and three-quarter-length boots. Again, they looked very human and had the now very-familiar long, blond hair. Suddenly, Llanca was forcibly grabbed, and a device was placed on the index finger of his left hand. He then became disoriented and fainted. Later, Llanca recalled that the beings had informed him that they had been present on Earth since 1950 and offered the following warning: "[Your] planet is bound to suffer very grave catastrophes if [your] behavior continues as it is at present."

The peace-loving hippies from beyond the veil had left their calling card yet again.

SPIDERY ALIEN

A high plateau bordered by the Trent Valley to the north and the West Midlands to the south, the huge and picturesque Cannock Chase has been an integral feature of the Staffordshire landscape for generations. Following an initial invasion of Britain in 43 C.E., Roman forces advanced to the south to what is now the town of Cannock along a route that would become known as Watling Street, a major, and historic, Roman road. The surrounding countryside was very heavily wooded even back then, as is demonstrated by the Romans' name for the area: Letocetum, or the Grey Woods.

In 1872, John Marius Wilson said of the Cannock Chase in his Gazetteer of England and Wales that the "ancient forest … extends to the vicinity of Bednal, Lichfield, and the Trent, with an area of about 25,000 acres; and was anciently a hunting-ground of the

Mercian and the Norman kings. It long was covered with wood; but is now bleak, moorish, and wild; yet is so rich in coal and ironstone as to have been much encroached upon both for mining and for cultivation. Large portions of it present the attractions of a hill country; and some spots have ancient standing-stones, supposed to be Druidical."

Designated as an area of outstanding beauty, today the Chase runs to approximately twenty-six square miles, is home to a herd of more than eight hundred deer and gained deep notoriety in the late 1960s when the remains of three young girls were found buried on the Chase. A Walsall, West Midlands, man named Raymond Leslie Morris was found guilty of one of the killings—seven-year-old Christine Darby—and was strongly suspected of having killed the other two: six-year-old Margaret Reynolds and Diana Joy Tift, who was just five, although such was never definitively proved by police investigators. However, outstanding beauty and terrible tragedy are not the only things that have shaped and sculpted the history of Cannock Chase.

For years, sightings have been made in the mysterious woods of gleaming flying saucers and Men in Black. Animal mutilations are rife, as are tales of huge, black, triangular-shaped UFOs. It's against this background of wooded landscape that a strange affair occurred in 2001. It comes from a man named Mike Johnson, who tells us the following:

"I studied Ecology at the University of Wolverhampton from 1997 to 2001 and was heavily involved in surveying vegetation on the Chase for the University and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. In June 2001 I was at the Chase a little due north of the German War Cemetery when something very strange happened. [It was] an event which I've never been able to explain.

Located in Staffordshire, England, Cannock Chase is noted for its beauty that is home to a large herd of deer. Sadly, it is also where three young girls met their end.

"The land at this location had been plantation forest that had been cleared some years earlier. I was searching for an example of the Midland Hawthorn I had been told was growing at this location. The weather was clear visibility, excellent, and the time was approximately 1400 hours. While searching I was aware that the area had gone oddly quiet; normally you can hear birds and traffic. At this time I saw a herd of perhaps fifty deer come hurtling across a ridge perhaps eight or nine hundred meters away from me. They were running quite fast to an area of mature plantation forest to my right.

"I was cheered by the site of them, as in the past I had only a rare glimpse of small groups of deer. At this time I was aware that

the area in which I was standing seemed unfamiliar. The path which I had travelled down from the cemetery was on my left due west, as opposed to the east, which it should have been. The sun's position, which should have been high in the west, was now directly north. Several landmarks, such as the ridge, were still in situ and recognizable from previous trips. However, the area to the south, which rises towards the cemetery, was now due west. To all intents and purposes, it was as if someone had taken a slice of the landscape away and moved the sun.

"I was aware that sometimes when in terrain such as this you may become disorientated and lost. I had a comprehensive map and compass and sat down to take stock of my position. The compass was unmoving with not a flicker of life, so I took the suns position as due west and tried to find my position on the map looking for landmarks and ridge lines. The view in front of me was not that of the map; and the path which I took from the German cemetery was not the path I was looking at."

Before moving on with the rest of Mike's story, a word or several about the German cemetery to which he refers: Situated near Broadhurst Green, the cemetery is a memorial to no fewer than five thousand German servicemen, whose graves are marked by headstones constructed out of Belgian granite and set in plots of heather. A tribute to the spirit of cooperation that exists between the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgraberfursorge—the German War Graves Commission—the cemetery has its origins in 1959, the year in which Germany made the first, initial approaches with a view to finding a site on the Chase near the existing Commonwealth Cemetery that contains the graves of 388 men from both the First and Second World Wars, including nearly three hundred German soldiers.

In March 1962, the County Council made a gift of the land to the German government, with the design of the cemetery and its surrounding buildings placed in the hands of Professor Diez Brandi of Gottingen, Germany, and Harold Doffman and Peter Leach, who were partners in a Stafford firm of architects.

As a result of the construction of the cemetery between 1964 and 1966, the bodies of numerous German servicemen, such as sailors buried at seaports around the British coast, airmen shot down inland, and soldiers—most of whom were prisoners of war buried in churchyards around the country—were transferred to the cemetery, which today boasts thousands of visitors per year, including some of a very strange type, as the next part of Mike's story makes acutely clear:

"The silence was strange, the landscape unfamiliar, and I was effectively lost only seven hundred meters from my car parked at the cemetery. I noticed a group of three elderly walkers rambling in the distance and thought I'd wait until they were closer. They were walking towards me, as far as I could tell; then I would take stock of my position with their knowledge. About ten minutes passed as I watched them approach. They got to about five hundred meter away from me when I realized I could hear every word they said; it was as if they were standing in front of me.

"There was a tall man in cream trousers and a shirt with a small rucksack, and two women aged maybe fifty to sixty with waterproof coats tied around their waists. As I watched them, they simply popped out of existence. One second they were there and the next gone. I assumed they had descended into a gully and had gone out of sight but I watched for a few minutes and they didn't appear. Then I noticed them approximately two hundred metres to my left of my peripheral vision; but now they had someone extra with them."

It's now that Mike's account takes on decidedly weird proportions: "This character was tall, with very thin arms and legs, dressed in what I presumed were grey trousers and a tight long sleeved shirt of the same color. He—I presumed it was a he—walked to the rear of them and when they stopped for a second he stopped also. Observing the group, I now came to the conclusion this added walker was not what he seemed. His hairless head was elongated and neck spindly, and his arms reached practically past his knees; I could not discern a facial feature. The clincher was when one of the ladies stopped and drank from a bottle of water: he approached her quite closely and I realized he was around three meters tall. At this point I had a feeling of intense disorientation and the added walker turned to look at me and put a hand on the lady's shoulder—this gesture seemed protective, as if to show me they were under his protection and I dare not interfere. I turned away to pick up my rucksack and approach the group, and when I looked up again I saw the original path to the German cemetery was again in situ, with a large German Shepherd dog bounding down it, followed by a group of children and adults. The sun had returned to the west and all landmarks were again in vision. The walkers had gone and so had the landscape with them. I practically legged-it up the path to the car park and drove away. To this day I've never gone back."

His hairless head was elongated and neck spindly, and his arms reached practically past his knees; I could not discern a facial feature.

Looking back on what occurred, Mike said: "I must state that

the incident was so strange that even today I can't explain any of it. I hope it is of some interest to your investigations. It has certainly been cathartic for me personally."

In a follow-up exchange with Mike, he told me: "Animals or beings, [I'm] not quite sure what it was I saw. I'm a pretty good observer of details and in a sense had a better look at the animal. As you know animals have a keen sense of environment: they have to in order to survive. An animal will keenly survey the surrounding area quickly and repeatedly using all its senses. This creature was, in my opinion, sentient and had a complete sense of self. Why the walkers had no interaction with it, I have no idea. Why the walkers 'jumped' a few hundred meters and appeared with the creature: again no clue at all."

Mike continued astutely in a fashion with which I was in full agreement: "Personally, I cannot accept that a literal 'Bigfoot' type animal of a flesh and blood nature, at least in the way we understand the term, can live on the Chase or anywhere in the U.K. It would, of course, require a substantial colony of such creatures, and evidence of massive ingestion of plants, leaves, etc to feed such a population. Yet, this appears not to be happening. Since the observation of the events, I have turned the matter over and over in my mind, trying to ascertain the how's and therefore's [sic] of the event. The environment was changed for a few minutes; of that I have no doubt. Was the change purely on an observational level and only observed by me? I think that's a definite hypothesis. I haven't really got a sense of the extra-normal and my past history is just that of a normal existence in Wolverhampton. Another hypothesis is that I was in the right place at the right time.

"My personal belief is that many of these 'animals' are indeed more paranormal in nature. I hate to use terms like 'inter-dimensional,' as that conjures up all sorts of science fiction-like

scenarios; but it is indeed a fact that many such reports do seem to suggest a brief merging of two realities when these encounters occur. Looking at the observations, one known environment took on the characteristics of a second unknown environment for a time which resulted in a sighting of a sentient unknown being and three 'known' beings. That's a few too many unknowns for an ex-ecologist to stomach, I'm afraid."

The high strangeness was not quite over for Mike, as he explained: "A year later I was at Loch Garten in the northeast of Scotland close to the Cairngorms [author's note: Interestingly, the Cairngorms mountain range is reputed to be home to a spectral Bigfoot-type creature known as the Big Grey Man, about which a great deal more will be written later], in beautiful surroundings, and in an area of untouched ancient pine forest when I had the strong feeling that something wasn't quite correct about the environment and, in particular, one area ahead of me. No strange adjustments of the landscape, no figures striding across the greenery, but the overwhelming feeling of something not right with this one area. Nothing to report visually, or any other way: just a tingle that whatever that area was—and it was simply an area of mature Scots Pine and Alder, as I remember—it didn't belong there. The same thing happens maybe a few times a year when I'm out and about."

It seems highly unlikely that a Bigfoot-like creature would occur naturally in the English countryside, which might lead one to speculate such a beast would have to be paranormal in nature.

Mike concluded: "Having had a few more experiences, I can say that yes, the Cannock event certainly changed my experience of certain sites and environments. My depth perception changes during the 'tingle.' An example or description: if you look at the corner of a room where the ceiling meets the two walls you see an inside corner. I see an outside corner. That's the best way to describe the feeling."

It's worth noting, too, that the very unnerving phenomenon of deep disorientation in a wholly familiar environment as described by Mike is nothing new in the slightest. His strange experience at the German Cemetery on the Cannock Chase—where he clearly seems to have been rendered into a distinct state of altered reality that affected his ability to accurately gauge his location—very much brings to mind the words of Margaret Ann Courtney, a noted expert in Cornish folklore.

In 1890, she said of the games and manipulative behavior of fairies, goblins, and a wide assortment of what have become known, collectively, as the “little people” or the “wee folk”:

“When mischievously inclined pisky often leads benighted people a sad dance; like Will of the Wisp, he takes them over hedges and ditches, and sometimes round and round the same field, from which they in vain try to find their way home (although they can always see the path close at hand)….”

It’s also worth noting that while today, the “pisky” to which Courtney referred—a diminutive entity that can be both mischievous and malevolent, whose origins date back centuries—conjures up imagery in the minds of many tiny, playful beings that flitter and flutter around inviting streams and glades on wings of gossamer, such is actually not always the case. In times long gone, one particular form that the pisky would adopt was that of a hideous troll—perhaps, it might be suggested, not unlike the hairy trolls of Slitting Mill, as described in the next chapter. The fact that Slitting Mill is literally only a few mere minutes’ drive from the Cannock Chase’s German Cemetery makes this particular matter all the more worthy of wonder and intrigue.

TROLLS

It was in the early hours of a winter's morning in 1975 when Barry and Elaine, a married couple in their late twenties with two small children at the time, were driving toward their Slitting Mill, Staffordshire, home after attending a Christmas party with friends and family in the nearby town of Penkridge. It should be noted that Penkridge is in the heart of the UFO-infested Cannock Chase woods, which surfaces in several of the accounts related in the pages of this book. As the pair headed toward the small village (its population today, four centuries after its initial foundations were laid, is still fewer than three hundred), their car's engine began to splutter and, to their consternation and concern, completely died. Having managed to carefully coast the car to the side of the road, Barry proceeded to quickly open the bonnet and take a look at the engine—"even though I'm mainly useless at mechanical stuff," he stated. No loose wires were evident, the

radiator was certainly not overheated, and a check of the car's fuses did not provide any indication of what might be the problem, but as the family was less than half a mile or so from home at that point, Barry made a quick and decisive decision, as he explained:

"We had a picnic blanket in the boot [of the car] and I got it out. I got back into the car and I said to Elaine something like: 'Let's cover you up and the kids with the blanket.' They were in the back sleeping and [were] only four and six at the time. So I said to [Elaine]: 'You stay with them, and I'll run back home and get your car, pick the three of you up, and then we'll leave my car here, and we can get someone out from a garage to look at it tomorrow.'"

At that point, however, their plans were thrown into complete and utter disarray. According to Barry, Elaine let out a loud scream, terrified by the sight of a small figure that ran across the road in front of them at a high speed. She continues the story: "I just about saw it at the last second, and then another one followed it, and then a third one. The best way I can describe them to you is like a hairy troll or something like that. We had some moonlight and they were like little men, but with hunchbacks and big, hooked noses and not a stitch on them at all. Not a stitch, at all; just hair all over them. I'd say they were all four-feet-tallish, and when the third one crossed by us, you could see them at the edge of the trees—wary, or something, anyway."

At that point things became very hazy indeed, says Barry: "We both know from memory they came forwards, towards us, very slowly to us, and I've thought since they were interested in us or wanted to know who we were. They came very slowly, and it was a bit like we were being hunted, to me. Elaine was hysterical; and with the kids with us, I wasn't far-off, either.

The creatures on the road were hairy, hunchbacked, and had big, hooked noses. They were there and then quickly disappeared.

"But that's all we remember. The next, it's all gone; nothing. Neither of us remembers seeing them go, and the next thing it was about two o'clock and the car started fine, then. It felt like something had happened to us, but I couldn't quite put my finger on, you know what I mean? But the memory thing is the biggest problem, even now. What was it? I did have a dream later about them surrounding the car, but that's it, really. But they were there and we did see them, right up by the Stone House" [author's note: this is a reference to a large, old abode—locally well known—that sits on the edge of the village of Slitting Mill and dates back to 1584, two centuries prior to the emergence of the village in the 1700s].

Barry states that to this day, both he and Elaine, now in their

late sixties, still feel very uneasy about the loss of memory they experienced back in 1975, but he is keen to affirm that "I know, and we know, we both saw them. The kids don't remember a thing, thank god. They were horrible little things. All that hair: Trolls, goblins, something. But they were there and they were real." Neither Barry nor Elaine have ever experienced any further such incidents or encounters with the unknown, but they have never forgotten those disturbing events deep in the heart of Slitting Mill on a chilly, winter night all those years ago.

What do you do when a complete stranger tells you that they have seen a very odd-looking animal roaming around the fringes of New York's Central Park? Well, you listen carefully to what the witness has to say, and you do your best to come to some meaningful conclusion. That is what I attempted to do some years ago when I was on the receiving end of an email from a man named Barry—not to be confused with the Barry above, although the coincidence is interesting—who claimed to have seen an extremely strange, small, humanoid beast in the park back in 1997. Of course, the date of the case meant that the trail had long since gone cold, but that didn't stop me from at least taking the time to sit down with the witness while he was on a managerial training course in Waco, Texas (which is only a relatively short drive from my Arlington, Texas, home).

Barry's story was certainly one of the weirdest I have ever heard; however, I learned a long time ago that the world of cryptozoology and monster hunting can be a very strange and surreal one. For that reason, I always try to give everyone a fair hearing (unless they're an obvious nut)—which is precisely what I

did with Barry. Barry told me that on the day in question—which was a sunny weekday in either June or July 1997—he was strolling through the park. All was utterly normal until he approached one particularly tree-and bush-shrouded area. He was shocked to the core when, out of nowhere, an unknown animal burst wildly through the foliage. Barry claimed to me that the creature was manlike in shape and covered in hair of a distinctly rusty color—but, unlike the towering Bigfoot of the West Coast, it was little more than three feet in height. Minifoot might have been a far better term to use, I mused, as I listened to the very odd tale. Barry could only watch with a mixture of shock and awe as the diminutive man beast charged across the path in front of him at a distance of no more than about twenty feet, came to a screeching halt for a couple of seconds, stared intently into his eyes, and then headed off at high speed again before finally vanishing beneath a small bridge—inside the perimeter of the park, no less.

Barry was clearly very embarrassed about discussing his sighting—even more than a few years later. As a person who was clearly intelligent, coherent, and presentable, he acutely realized how strange his story sounded, too. I had to agree; however, I also had to realize that Barry had absolutely nothing to gain at all by relating the details of his experience of the highly unusual kind. In fact, one could argue that if Barry's full name was revealed at the time, he just might have had a great deal to lose. He still might!

Barry claimed to me that the creature was manlike in shape and covered in hair of a distinctly rusty color—but … it was little more than three feet in height.

I asked Barry to relate the details for me again. He did so, and I carefully took notes, ensuring that we finally had every aspect of the story accounted for. He admitted that the facts were scant—aside, that is, from his unswerving position that for a few brief moments in summer 1997, he saw a small, hairy, manlike beast scurrying across the grass of Central Park.

As I admitted to Barry, I could really do very little aside from carefully logging the details of the tale in my database and seeing if anything else of a similar nature ever surfaced. Unsurprisingly, it most assuredly has not, not even remotely. Barry's was just one of those very odd, fringe cases that, from time to time, perplex those of us who choose to dig into the world of monsters and strange creatures.

VIRUSES OF THE E.T. TYPE

What if aliens come to Earth in the form of a potentially deadly virus? According to Article IX of The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies that was collectively signed in Washington, London, and Moscow on January 27, 1967, and that was entered into force on October 10 of that year:

"In the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, States Parties to the Treaty shall be guided by the principle of co-operation and mutual assistance and shall conduct all their activities in outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, with due regard to the corresponding interests of all other States Parties to the Treaty. States Parties to the Treaty shall pursue studies of outer space,

including the Moon and other celestial bodies, and conduct exploration of them so as to avoid their harmful contamination and also adverse changes in the environment of the Earth resulting from the introduction of extraterrestrial matter and, where necessary, shall adopt appropriate measures for this purpose.

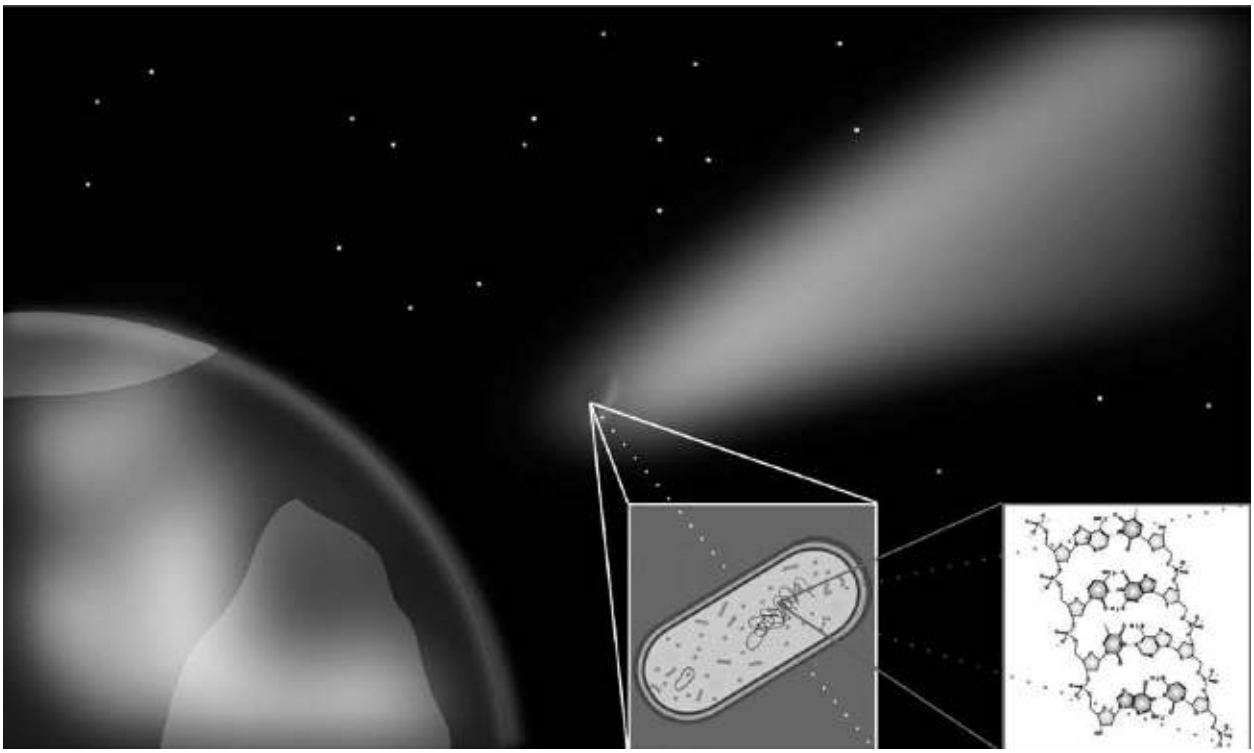
"If a State Party to the Treaty has reason to believe that an activity or experiment planned by it or its nationals in outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, would cause potentially harmful interference with activities of other States Parties in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, it shall undertake appropriate international consultations before proceeding with any such activity or experiment. A State Party to the Treaty which has reason to believe that an activity or experiment planned by another State Party in outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, would cause potentially harmful interference with activities in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, may request consultation concerning the activity or experiment."

The concern expressed within the above extract about "adverse changes in the environment of the Earth resulting from the introduction of extraterrestrial matter" was and, indeed, still is a very real one. In an article titled "Alien Infection," writer Leslie Mullen noted: "When diseases like SARS, Mad Cow Disease and Monkey-pox cross the species barrier and infect humans, they dominate news headlines. Just imagine, then, the reaction if potentially infectious pathogens were found in rock samples from Mars. As we look toward exploring other worlds, and perhaps even bringing samples back to Earth for testing, astrobiologists have to wonder: could alien pathogens cross the 'planet' barrier and wreak havoc on our world? Even though there is no proof of

bacterial or viral pathogens anywhere except Earth, there is already a worried advocacy group called the International Committee Against Martian Sample Return, and science fiction novels like The Andromeda Strain depict nightmare alien infection scenarios."

"Sample Return Missions Scare Some Researchers" was the headline that appeared on www.space.com on April 9, 2000. "Researchers, environmentalists and policymakers want NASA to consider carefully its plans to visit and bring back samples from Mars, Europa, and other solar system bodies," it was reported. According to Norine Noonan, director of the Environmental Protection Agency's research arm, who also had at the time recently chaired a NASA-sponsored panel on planetary protection: "This is a very serious issue, and there are clearly many concerns."

It was added: "NASA's longstanding policy is to both protect the Earth and preserve planetary conditions for future biological and organic constituent exploration.… In recent years, NASA has commissioned the National Research Council to conduct several studies on the potential for contaminating other worlds. Now that the space agency also is considering a variety of sample return missions, researchers are becoming increasingly aware that they must put clear standards in place to protect against the highly unlikely but possible introduction—and escape—of extraterrestrial life to Earth. While minimal, the risk level 'is not zero,' warns one NRC study."



Panspermia is the theory that alien life in the form of bacteria, most likely, could be transported to this planet by piggybacking on a traveling body such as a meteoroid.

Science writer Robert Roy Britt stated on November 27, 2000, that "a group of scientists says it has collected an alien bacterium 10 miles above Earth, plus signatures of other extraterrestrial microbes even higher in the atmosphere.… The bacterium was collected at that altitude by a balloon operated by the Indian Space Research Organization. Chandra Wickramasinghe, who leads a study into the results, called the microbe a previously unknown strain of bacteria and said it likely came from a comet. Wickramasinghe and a colleague, Fred Hoyle, say the findings support an idea they pioneered, called panspermia, which holds that the seeds of life are everywhere in space and are the source for life on Earth."

In June 2003, National Geographic News revealed: "In a letter to the British medical journal The Lancet, Chandra

Wickramasinghe from Cardiff University in Wales, and other scientists, propose that SARS may have originated in outer space then fallen down to Earth and landed in China, where the outbreak began. It sounds like a headline from a supermarket tabloid, but the idea may not be as outlandish as it first appears. One hundred tons (90 metric tons) of space debris fall on Earth every day; some scientists believe as much as one ton (0.9 metric ton) of bacteria from space is part of that daily deposit. Particles carrying the SARS virus could have come from a comet, the researchers say, and released into the debris trail of the comet's tail. The Earth's passage through the stream would have led to the entry of the culprit particles. 'We're not saying this is definitely what happened,' said Wickramasinghe, who is also the director of the Cardiff Center for Astrobiology, a research effort that seeks evidence of extraterrestrial life. 'But the theory should not be ruled out.'"

One of those who recognized the potential threat posed by lethal viruses of exotic origins was Joshua Lederberg, who was born in New Jersey in 1925 and obtained his B.A. with honors in zoology at Columbia. In 1947, Lederberg was appointed assistant professor of genetics at the University of Wisconsin, where he was promoted to associate professor in 1950 and subsequently to professor in 1954. Stanford University Medical School entrusted to him the organization of its Department of Genetics and appointed him professor and executive head in 1959. Lederberg's lifelong research, for which he received the Nobel Prize in 1958 at the age of thirty-three, was in genetic structure and function in microorganisms, and he was involved in artificial intelligence research, in computer science, and in NASA's experimental programs seeking life on Mars. He died in 2008.

With a generation time of 30 minutes and easy dissemination by winds and currents, common bacteria could occupy a nutrient medium the size of the earth in a few days or weeks.

An eight-page paper written by Lederberg for Science on August 12, 1960, titled "Exobiology: Approaches to Life Beyond the Earth," states in part: "The introduction of microbial life to a previously barren planet, or to one occupied by a less well-adapted form of life, could result in the explosive growth of the implant. With a generation time of 30 minutes and easy dissemination by winds and currents, common bacteria could occupy a nutrient medium the size of the earth in a few days or weeks."

More disturbing extracts state: "The most dramatic hazard would be the introduction of a new disease, imperilling human health. What we know of the biology of infection makes this an extremely unlikely possibility.… However, a converse argument can also be made, that we have evolved our specific defenses against terrestrial bacteria and that we might be less capable of coping with organisms that lack the proteins and carbohydrates by which they could be recognized as foreign … at present the prospects for treating a returning vehicle to neutralize any possible hazard are at best marginal by comparison with the immensity of the risk."

By the mid-1960s, Lederberg was writing a column for the Washington Post newspaper. Several of those columns are of both note and relevance to the issues presented within the pages of this book. On September 24, 1966, Lederberg wrote a feature for the newspaper titled "A Treaty on Germ Warfare" that dealt with his

worries about biological warfare. In part, Lederberg said: “The United States has vehemently denied the military use of any biological weapons or any lethal chemical weapons. However, research on these weapons has continued through and from World War II. The Army has a wellknown research facility at Fort Detrick, Md., and a testing station at Dugway, Utah.… The large scale deployment of infectious agents is a potential threat against the whole species: mutant forms of viruses could well develop that would spread over the earth’s population for a new Black Death.… The future of the species is very much bound up with the control of these weapons.…”

Cowritten by Lederberg with Carl Sagan and Elliott C. Levinthal, “Contamination of Mars” is an eighteen-page paper that was published by the Smithsonian Institution in June 1967 that largely concentrates upon ascertaining the potential hazards that the human species might pose to the planet Mars by way of introducing hostile organisms into the planet’s ecosystem. The paper contains an intriguing entry that focuses on the way in which hostile organisms might be released if a spacecraft crashed on the surface of Mars.

According to “Contamination of Mars”: “One serious contingency for release of contained micro-organisms is a crash-landing, and, particularly, a spacecraft impacting Mars with a velocity about 6 km/sec will be totally pulverized. But experience with missile impact indicates that even at impact velocities of 0.6 km/sec or less, a significant fraction of the missile’s mass is not in the impact crater and is unrecoverable. The shells and grenades used in bacteriological warfare indicate that contained microorganisms will survive such impacts.… In the case of a hard landing, and particularly, of a hypervelocity impact of a spacecraft on Mars, spacecraft fragments will be distributed over a wide area.

In a period of minutes—less than the time for many unshielded terrestrial organisms to accumulate an ultraviolet mean lethal dose on Mars—fragments travelling in parabolic trajectories at 6 km/sec will cover a lateral distance ~1000 km."

The Black Death that killed half of Europe in the Middle Ages was caused by the bacterium Yersinia pestis brought in from trade routes leading from Central Asia. Just as trade routes spread disease from continent to continent, space travel could do so planet to planet.

Published in the Washington Post on August 31, 1968, a feature from Lederberg titled "The Infamous Black Death May Return to Haunt Us" dealt with the nature of the Black Death that decimated Europe in the fourteenth century and drew parallels between biological warfare research in the twentieth century and the fears about the regulation and control of such research, a theme that Lederberg often returned to.

Printed in the Washington Post on September 7, 1969,

Lederberg's "Mankind Had a Near Miss from a Mystery Pandemic" told a story of highly unsettling proportions:

"In the aftermath of the six-day war in the Middle East last summer, direct air transport from Uganda to Germany and Yugoslavia was disrupted. Shipments of 'green monkeys,' for use in preparing vaccines, were diverted to London airport before transhipment. In the process, a group of at least eight monkeys acquired a disease heretofore unknown to medical science. The disease remains unnamed but might be called Marburg-virus, for it infected at least thirty-two people and killed five of them in Marburg, Germany, and infected two in Frankfurt."

Lederberg continued: "The origin of Marburg virus is unknown. The threat of a major virus epidemic—a global pandemic—hangs over the head of the species at any time. We were lucky on this occasion, but it was a near miss. It could easily have established a very large focus of infection in countries like India or China or South Vietnam, and in our present knowledge of virology we would have been ill-equipped to stop it from dominating the earth, with a half-billion casualties."

On July 13, 1969, Lederberg wrote a letter to the New York Times and castigated the newspaper for discussing the possibility that the astronauts who returned from the Apollo 11 Moon-landing mission—Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Michael Collins—"a tangible risk of global infection by lunar microbes." Lederberg explained that the lack of an atmosphere effectively rendered it almost impossible for the Moon to harbor deadly microbes or viruses that could have an effect on our planet. He stressed, however, that the issue of having to "protect the Earth against possible infection from Mars" was one that definitely needed resolving and required more study.

Published in the Post on August 16, 1970, a two-page feature

from Lederberg titled “Engineering Viruses for Health or Warfare” addressed the issue of modified and created viruses for use in warfare and similar modifications for health purposes. Lederberg stated in part: “We now begin to realize that the intentional release of an infectious particle, be it a virus or bacterium, from the confines of the laboratory or of medical practice must be formally condemned as an irresponsible threat against the whole human community.”

When the space shuttle Columbia broke apart during reentry on February 1, 2003, more than eighty onboard science experiments were lost in the fiery descent. On February 24, 2006, however, it was revealed that Texas State University–San Marcos biologist Robert McLean had salvaged some unexpected surprises from the wreckage: namely, a strain of slow-growing bacteria that had survived the crash, a discovery which may have significant implications for the concept of panspermia, that is the scenario of life “hitchhiking” on rocks ejected from meteorite impacts on one world that could travel through space and seed other worlds with life under favorable conditions.

Notably, found within the wreckage of Columbia was a bacteria called microbispora: a slow-growing organism normally found in soil that McLean determined had probably contaminated the experiment prior to launch. “This organism appears to have survived an atmospheric passage, with the heat and the force of impact,” McLean said. “That’s only about a fifth of the speed that something on a real meteorite would have to survive, but it is at least five or six times faster than what’s been tested before. This is important for panspermia, because if something survives space travel, it eventually has to get down to the Earth and survive passage through the atmosphere and impact. This doesn’t prove anything; it just contributes evidence to the plausibility of

panspermia."

Power engine heads from the space shuttle Columbia were found in Louisiana after the explosion. While the crew were killed, bacteria from an onboard experiment survived.

It was revealed in the British Observer newspaper on March 5, 2006, that on July 25, 2001, "blood-red rain" fell over the Kerala district of western India and continued for the next two months. All along the coast it rained crimson, turning local people's clothes pink, burning leaves on trees, and falling as scarlet sheets at some points. Godfrey Louis, a physicist at Mahatma Gandhi University in Kottayam, stated: "If you look at these particles under a microscope, you can see they are not dust, they have a clear biological appearance." Indeed, Louis concluded that the rain was made up of bacterialike material that had been swept to Earth from a passing comet. Milton Wainwright, a microbiologist at Sheffield, tested samples of Kerala's "red rain." Unsure of what they contained, he could only say that "it is certainly not dust. Nor is there any DNA there, but then alien bacteria would not necessarily

contain DNA."

Louis added: "If anybody hears a theory like this, that it is from a comet, they dismiss it as an unbelievable kind of conclusion. Unless people understand our arguments—people will just rule it out as an impossible thing, that extra-terrestrial biology is responsible for this red rain."

From the Journal of the American Medical Association on August 5, 1988, "Medical Science, Infectious Disease and the Unity of Humankind" is a twopage paper dealing with Joshua Lederberg's concerns about superviruses wreaking havoc across the globe. As Lederberg noted in the final paragraph of this paper: "The microbe that felled one child in a distant continent yesterday can reach yours today and seed a global pandemic tomorrow." Without doubt, that is a sobering and disturbing thought.

WOMEN IN BLACK

Just about everyone has heard of the Men in Black largely because of the blockbuster movies Men in Black I, II, and III. Far fewer, however, have heard of the Women in Black. They are just as dangerous as their male counterparts. Not only that, they are clearly alien in origin—as are the MIB, as we have seen. They, too, have pale skin, strange eyes, and the ability to control minds, as we shall now see.

The mid- to late 1960s was a period when encounters with the Women in Black reached near-fever-pitch levels. It all began in early spring 1967, when reports began to surface of black-garbed "gypsy women" roaming around certain quieter parts of New York. They clearly weren't regular gypsies, however. That much was made clear by the fact that they exclusively targeted those who had undergone UFO encounters. Odder still, on more than a few

occasions, the alleged gypsy women were seen in the dead of night, standing as still as statues and staring malevolently into the homes of people who claimed close encounters with alien entities. Attempts to confront them were met with outright hostility—something that made even the homeowners back away in fear.

One of the weirdest of all the early 1967 cases occurred in the vicinity of Melville, New York, and involved a rancher whose farm was located in a rural, isolated part of town. Only days before he received a most unwelcome visit, the man saw a definitive flying saucer hovering over one of his fields, which—somewhat amazingly—had what was described as a "ladder" hanging from its underside—at least, until the ladder was hastily retracted and the saucer shot away, high into the sky, and vanished from view. That was hardly the end of the matter, however.

One of the gypsy women reported roaming about New York City came to his door and requested water so she could swallow a pill. Nothing more.

Just a few days later, the man heard a knock at the door. Given that his home was in the middle of pretty much nowhere, he opened the door both slowly and cautiously. Standing before him was a "gypsy lady" who was dressed in a gray dress that reached her ankles and sandals. Just like so many of the Men in Black, her skin was noted for its deep, olive complexion, and her eyes were described as "Oriental." The rancher added that she stood around five-foot-four and had long hair that was "so black" it "looked

dyed."

The woman said to the slightly alarmed man: "I have traveled a long way. May I have a glass of water? I must take a pill."

Baffled, the man decided not to risk incurring her wrath and quickly fetched her a glass of water, watching as she swallowed a round, green-colored pill. She thanked him, turned, and walked away—which the man found very strange, given that he lived on a back road and walking to the nearest town would be an arduous task, to say the least.

John Keel said of this acutely odd and disconcerting episode: "'I have traveled a long way' is an old Masonic pass phrase and is frequently used in these contacts." He added: "The pill-taking ploy is also a common procedure. When a most peculiar being visited a family on Cape May, New Jersey, early in 1967, he also took a pill. He, too, had 'traveled a long way,' and after conducting an inane interview with the family, he stepped into the night, got into a black Cadillac, and drove off with the lights out."

Moving on to 1968 is the story of UFO researcher "Dan O.," which was provided to paranormal authority Brad Steiger. It was the night of July 13, 1968, when Dan had the great misfortune to cross paths with a Woman in Black. He was on the phone, speaking with a colleague in the UFO field, when their phone call was suddenly, and mysteriously, interrupted. Dan told Steiger: "The third party identified herself as a Mrs. Slago, who, as she said, was accidentally connected with our line. She had been listening to our conversation strictly out of curiosity."

Despite the fact that Mrs. Slago was a complete stranger and

had, according to her, intruded upon the conversation by mistake, Dan decided to tell her about his UFO research since she had at least heard snippets of what he and his friend had been talking about. As the conversation between Dan and Mrs. Slago progressed, however, the likelihood that her intrusion was all a big mistake, and nothing else, quickly evaporated. Dan's words make that extremely clear. He told Steiger that Mrs. Slago suggested that investigating UFOs was not a wise thing to do and that the matter of UFOs possibly being of alien origin was something Dan should steer well clear of.

Dan continued: "She also stated that UFO organizations should not attempt to further the investigation and study of UFOs, because as she put it, 'Earth people do not understand.' She suddenly stopped short of what she was about to say, as if she caught herself about to say something that I should not hear."

She also stated that UFO organizations should not attempt to further the investigation and study of UFOs, because as she put it, "Earth people do not understand."

Things then got even odder and somewhat troubling: the woman warned Dan that he should cease his UFO investigations, that it was not wise to speak on the phone about such matters, and that her name was not Slago, after all. It was Nelson, and she worked as a "researcher" for the local police. At that point, Mrs. Slago—or Nelson—abruptly left the conversation. The story wasn't over, however, as Dan demonstrated to Steiger:

"When we checked with the police headquarters, the officers

told us that they had no knowledge of either a 'Mrs. Nelson' or a 'Mrs. Slago' being connected with any phase of police research. Following this incident, we had a complete check made on our telephone lines, but the check revealed no evidence of wire-tapping or anything of that sort. A check with the telephone company revealed that a misconnection of this type could not possibly have been made."

Now let's take a trip to the 1970s. A bizarre story closely parallels—to an uncanny degree—the story of radio host Jaye P. Paro being drugged by a diabolical band of MIB back in 1967. In a very strange way, this new case involved none other than President Richard M. Nixon and a Woman in Black! The story surfaced on October 23, 1971. The media reported:

"A part-time housekeeper at President Nixon's Key Biscayne retreat has testified she was put in a hypnotic daze by a stranger who told her to shoplift four dresses. Shirley Cromartie, 32, and a mother of three, pleaded no contest Thursday and was given a suspended sentence after law enforcement officers and a psychiatrist testified they believed she was telling the truth. Mrs. Cromartie holds a security clearance to work in the Florida White House, according to testimony. She said a woman met her in a parking lot and asked the time, then ordered her to take the items and bring them to her.

"Mrs. Cromartie testified she fell into a daze when the young woman released a jasmine-like scent from her left hand. 'I just sort of lost my will … it was a terrifying experience,' she testified. Mrs. Cromartie joined the Key Biscayne White House housekeeping

staff about a year ago, according to FBI Agent Leo McClairen. He testified her background was impeccable.

"Dr. Albert Jaslow, a psychiatrist, said he examined her and found she could be hypnotized 'quickly and easily' and believed she was telling the truth. 'But it wasn't the same when he hypnotized me,' Mrs. Cromartie said. 'I couldn't remember anything afterwards. Whatever that young woman did to me, it was like being in a sleepwalk, only awake.'"

As the media continued to dig into the story, things got even stranger. The mysterious woman with the mind-altering, "jasmine-like scent" was described as being attractive, young, dressed completely in black, and wearing a wig—the latter being somewhat a staple of certain WIB cases. Also, both the WIB and the MIB are oddly fond of asking people the time, as Cromartie's mysterious woman was so very careful to do.

Metro Court Judge Frederick Barad said of this surreal saga: "This is all so bizarre that I'm frightened what could happen to the president."

This latter point was something clearly on the mind of John Keel, too. He speculated that the hypnotic abilities of Cromartie's wig-wearing WIB amounted to "not some small demonstration for the benefit of President Nixon."

One of the strangest, and undeniably hair-raising, aspects of the Women in Black phenomenon is their often reported propensity to hiss at people in menacing, and almost animalistic, fashion. It's something that until late 2015, I had completely overlooked—hence why, in terms of its chronology, the story

appears here.

Reports of these hissing WIB date back to at least the nineteenth century and extend to very recent years. The Sunday Herald newspaper of January 13, 1893, told a disturbing tale of an encounter with just such a WIB in Rhinebeck, New York. The title of the article was "A Woman in Black." As for the subtitle, it got straight to the paranormal point: "Like Other Ghosts She Is Only Seen at Night—Neither Is She Dumb, but Emits a Hissing Sound Which Startles the Ear and Congeals the Blood."

According to the story, "a mysterious woman in black" was provoking "much fear" in and around Rhinebeck. It's hardly surprising when one takes note of what the Sunday Herald had to say next: "It is the story of a strange creature who glides noiselessly along the country roads at dead of night. She has never been known to address anybody, although she has met many. Her language is the language of signs. She invariably halts long enough to stretch out her long arm from beneath a black veil and at the same time make a hissing noise" [italics mine].

The mysterious Women in Black are notable not just for their sable dress but also for the odd habit of hissing at people.

Adding to the state of terror in which the unfortunate witnesses found themselves plunged, the WIB was described as being "thin, at least six feet four inches tall, with a slight stoop and a long stride." Not the sort of woman to cross paths with on a dark night in nineteenth-century Rhinebeck.

According to what newspaper staff learned of the hissing Woman in Black, she had first been seen around town roughly six weeks earlier—having previously haunted "the villages just north of Poughkeepsie." The first person in Rhinebeck who had the dubious honor of meeting the woman was John Judson of Chestnut Street. His encounter was mercifully brief and involved the sighting of "a tall black object standing perfectly still." Terrified, Judson raced for home, arriving in a "cold sweat."

By the following day, said the Herald, the story was "all over Rhinebeck." Some laughed and others shivered, reported the newspaper, but by the day after that, no one was laughing—no one at all—the reason being that one of the most respected figures in town, David Ackert, a prosperous businessman, also encountered the chilling Woman in Black. He noted to newspaper staff that he was six feet tall and even so, he "had to look up at the woman." It was added that "she shrank from him with a hissing sound" [italics mine]. Ackert added, increasing the anxiety around town: "I felt a shivering sensation, for she was so tall and slim and piratical looking."

As fear levels rose quickly and stratospherically, the local police were determined to put an end to the mystery. The village's four constables—Murray Dederick, Bill Sleight, George Wheeler, and John Heb—vowed to "capture the creature that very night." Unfortunately for everyone, she skillfully avoided the clutches of the police on that night—and also on every subsequent night. Next to see the Woman in Black was Thomas Sinclare, who, worried readers of the Herald were informed, "was pacing in the middle of the road with her head bent low and her long arms clasped behind her. Sinclare merely took one look." No doubt! Then, one night after that, James Traster, a tinsmith, encountered the village's "mysterious creature" on a side street at around 10:00 P.M. He didn't hang around, either.

It was all to no avail: the Woman in Black was impervious to the bullets. She raced across nearby darkened meadows and was lost to the all-enveloping night.

It was soon the turn of Florence Welch—"the pretty young teacher at Miller's school"—to see what most were earnestly hoping they would never see. Welch told the newspaper that at around 5:00 P.M., after leaving a friend's house—that of Mrs. Herman Asher—she happened to walk past the school and saw through a window the WIB sitting on one of the student's benches! Probably wisely, as dusk began to turn to darkness, Florence "ran for her life."

Further reports continued to surface over the next few days, the most notable one being that of Robert Shriver, the village blacksmith. When he saw the WIB, he didn't wait for her to hiss malevolently in his direction. What he did was whip out his pistol and pump three bullets into her. It was all to no avail: the Woman in Black was impervious to the bullets. She raced across nearby darkened meadows and was lost to the all-enveloping night.

It was to no one's satisfaction or comfort that the entire matter remained a disturbing conundrum, as the Herald was forced to admit: "Every resident of Rhinebeck is perfectly satisfied that the woman in black is a reality, but not one of them can think of who she can be. There is nobody near here who answers the description of the mysterious creature and there is no family that harbors a crazy person. The nearest asylum is at Poughkeepsie, 16 miles away, and no lunatic has escaped from that institution. To add to the mystery the strange creature is never seen abroad in the daylight and no one has stumbled upon her in any hiding place."

Moving on, let's not forget that in 1952, when Truman Bethurum was hanging out with his WIB from the stars, Aura Rhanes, she hissed malevolently at him in a Nevada diner during the early hours of the morning.

Now let's take a look at the present day. We'll do so with a report prepared by Neil Arnold, who knows a great deal about the matter of the Women in Black and what might appropriately be called their hissy fits. Over to Arnold: "For almost a century an abundance of motorists while driving through the village of Blue Bell Hill in Kent have claimed to have knocked down, picked up or seen by the roadside a young, forlorn female specter dressed in a pale dress. Over the years the legend has become known as the 'phantom hitchhiker of Blue Bell Hill' and yet what happened during January of 1993 on that ancient, chalk hill was far more sinister.

"On January 6th at 12:45 A.M. five people—the Maiden family—were travelling in a vehicle up what is known as the Old Chatham Road—the original route through Blue Bell Hill before the construction in the 1970s of the dual carriageway (the A229)—when they observed a figure standing in the road at the edge of the headlight beam. The driver, a Mr. Malcolm Maiden, was accompanied by his wife, Angela, who was the passenger, and in the backseat sat their young daughter who was fast asleep, plus Mrs. Maiden's mother and a friend of the family. The figure started across the dark lane; moving from right to left causing Mr. Maiden to slow the vehicle. At first, the four witnesses thought that they were being hoaxed by someone in a costume as possibly a very belated Halloween prank. The figure according to Mr. Maiden was 'wearing a long old fashioned dress, a tartan shawl round the top and a bonnet with a brim.'

"However, from here things became extremely unnerving. The headlights of the car illuminated a despicable form that appeared to

be hunched over ‘like when you trap a rabbit in your headlights’ but within a split second the apparition had rounded on the vehicle and it was then that the witnesses saw the face. ‘It was totally horrific,’ Mrs. Maiden reported, ‘[the face was] very small … black beady eyes. It was like a wizened face.’ And yet this was not the most terrifying characteristic of the hag.

“The worst thing of all was the mouth. It opened like an empty black hole. My mother was sitting directly behind me. At the same time I remember we said ‘Oh, my God!’

“Suddenly an eerie hissing noise filled the interior of the vehicle [italics mine] even though the windows were closed on this cold, clear night. The figure appeared to be clutching a spray of twigs which in a bony hand it shook aggressively. In panic Mrs. Maiden raised her arm as if to protect herself as the central locking of the car was engaged and finally—breaking from the spell of the hideous entity—Mr. Maiden put the car into correct gear and pulled away from the apparition leaving it to its own devilish devices. Mr. Maiden’s mother kept her eyes on the figure which seemed to then vanish into the shadows of the treeline and with that Angela’s daughter stirred from her slumber; stating that a horrible atmosphere had descended over the vehicle.

“The terrified family told the local newspaper of their ordeal with Mrs. Maiden adding: ‘I’ve never felt evil before and I’ve never been so terrified. I felt as if I had looked into the eyes of the Devil.’”

The most recent Woman in Black story to reach me surfaced in June 2018 and came from Denise Stoner. For twelve years,

Denise did background investigations for the military on recruits seeking highly classified clearances for work on nuclear submarines. Prior to retirement, Denise moved to the Naval Air Warfare Center, Training Systems Division, a military research facility where she was the training coordinator for several hundred military and civilian employees.

As he approached her she dropped her sunglasses to show him huge black eyes that were at least four times human size and they wrapped around the side of her head.

She told me: "My husband's run-in with the possible WIB was a few days ago when he decided he would take a bike ride around a lake he travels around on a regular basis and knows it well. If he is feeling pretty energetic, he begins near a pool and park complex, rides the trail nearby, and then turns into an area that has a Vet memorial then on around the lake that used to be part of the Navy Base—now new housing. When he entered the path, there was a woman jogging with one of those jogging strollers, but the top was down so he could not see a baby inside. This woman had sunglasses on that wrapped around her head and looked way too large for her head. She was thin and about 6 feet tall. She smiled at my husband as he passed on his bike.

"As he reached about the halfway point, there she was—I believe in front of him so he thought she might have come around the other way, which made sense but then he realized she had been behind him, pulled in front, and did a U-turn so he would notice her. She smiled at him once again, which he felt was really odd

and the smile was not normal. She was very thin and pale skinned. He still did not feel uncomfortable because not much scares him. He just thought she was a weird person. When he was about to exit the lake area and turn back onto the trail to the park once again, there she was suddenly in front of him and she stopped. He has figured out that she would have to be running 26 mph in order to catch up to him doing 12 mph on his bike. He felt an odd sense of concern. He did not stop but slowed down to about 6 mph I believe.

"As he approached her she dropped her sunglasses to show him huge black eyes that were at least four times human size and they wrapped around the side of her head. She grinned again and this time he noticed she did not have a real nose plus her mouth was long and thin with no teeth—only a dark gap. She stared hard at him; the hair on his arms stood up as he continued on. Once he reached the exit, he thought of turning back to see where she had gone if anywhere, looked back as he made the turn and could not see her at all. He still felt afraid. He vowed not to tell me and to forget the incident, thinking it would just go away, but it kept bothering him to the point that he decided to draw the picture and talk to me. He does not want to talk about it and feels it has something to do with me and there is relief in the telling for him.

"Second event was 2 days ago. Ed and I were shopping in a busy Costco. We were in the back of the store in a center aisle. There were some areas to my right with stands of items for sale with small aisles between. I looked up the aisle and spotted an elderly man in one of those electric chairs moving slowly toward me on the other side of the sale case. In front of him was a woman about 6 feet tall wearing shorts just above her knees that were a bright shiny material and pink. She was wearing a white shirt to the wrists. I looked up to see that her head was very abnormal—

shaped just like that of an insectoid and she had placed a white wig on top of it but the skull was sticking out. I could not believe what I was seeing. Her eyes were huge and black and tipped at an angle (more so than a Grey) and (I am guessing) in an attempt to hide what she was had taken what appeared to be black eyeliner and drew huge squares above and below the enormous eyes. This did no good at all in hiding what they were and made her more than freakish. She had two lines for a nose and from there the whole face dropped down like skin falling to just above the collarbone. There were bright red mandibles at the lower portion—one could 'tell their mind' was lipstick but NO WAY. Her face was white and fell downward in three layers.

"She was staring at me. Between us stood a lady with brown hair to her shoulders. She observed my face and turned to her right to see what I was looking at, immediately looked totally shocked. The very strange thing here was, my husband did not see this at all, nor did the man in the electric chair or he was escorting this thing somehow. Now, this woman looking at me looked as if she was going to have a heart attack, reached for her hair—why? Because her hair had lifted off her shoulders and was sticking straight out as if in a huge wind—there was no wind at all and no fan nearby. Her hair stood there—straight out to the side. She looked at me and pointed at the odd woman and asked me if I saw this thing. I said yes; she asked me "what is that"? I responded I did not know. I heard her but don't think we were speaking out loud … that was another odd thing about our communication.

"She began to make the sign of the cross on herself over and over again as this figure continued down toward the front of the store. Neither one of us made a move to follow to see what this was. The hair on this gal settled back on her shoulders and I began to tell Ed what had happened and asked if he had seen it and he

responded he did not think he could have stood another event. The woman walked away with her hand on her chest acting very shaky. This did not ‘go down’ like it should have. I should have spoken to her, interviewed her, ran after this thing, SOMETHING! None of this occurred! I never even looked down the aisle to see if I could see it. We all just went the other way and continued shopping but I can’t get the face out of my mind.

“So the saga continues. I don’t know why the activity is suddenly picking up. I am working cases and have had a phone call that is pretty interesting but would never share that private information. I just don’t know what to think. If any of this is reported to you or anything close to it, please let me know. I am going to see if I can get someone to draw the face for me.”

WORM MONSTER

Malcolm Lees enlisted in the British Royal Air Force in the early 1950s and left in the late 1960s. In 1962, he received a posting to a RAF station in the county of Wiltshire, England, which he declined to name, and worked in the prestigious and secretive world of intelligence gathering. Most of the work, Lees explained, was routine and even mundane, and he laughed heartily at the idea, spouted by many, that intelligence work was a glamorous one full of James Bond-style escapades. Nevertheless, Lees said, one aspect of his career really was stranger than fiction. Early one September morning in 1962, a call came into the base from someone who had seen a UFO hovering in the vicinity of the ancient standing-stones in the historic English village of Avebury, Wiltshire—which is only a stone's throw, so to speak, from Stonehenge.

UFO reports reached the base from time to time, said Lees.

They were always handled by the RAF's provost and security services. For the most part, they were mind-numbingly mundane and related to little more than sightings of unidentified lights in the sky that could, in reality, have been anything or nothing. Invariably, he said, the reports were a week, or even more, old by the time they were received, so they were simply filed and passed up the chain of command—which was then at Government Buildings, Acton, and relocated to Rudloe Manor in 1977. However, this particular case was a little different, said Lees.

The witness was a middle-aged lady who had lived in Avebury all of her adult life and was fascinated by archaeological history. A "spinster" (as the files describe her), she would often stroll among the Stonehenge-like formations at night, marveling at their creation and musing upon their history. It was on the night in question that she had been out walking at around 10:30 P.M. when she was both startled and amazed to see a small ball of light, perhaps two feet in diameter, gliding slowly through the stones. Transfixed and rooted to the spot, she watched as it closed in on her at a height of about twelve feet. The ball then stopped fifteen feet or so from her, and small amounts of what looked like liquid metal slowly and silently dripped from it to the ground. Then, in an instant, the ball exploded in a bright, white flash.

For a moment, she was blinded by its intensity and instinctively fell to her knees. When her eyes cleared, however, she was faced with a horrific sight. The ball of light had gone, but on the ground in front of her was what she could only describe as a monstrous, writhing worm.

The creature, she said, was about five feet long, perhaps eight or nine inches thick, and its skin was milk-white. As she slowly rose to her feet, the creature's head turned suddenly in her direction, and two bulging eyes opened. When it began to move

unsteadily toward her in a caterpillarlike fashion, she emitted a hysterical scream and fled the scene. Rushing back home, she slammed the door shut and frantically called the airbase, after having been directed to them by the less-than-impressed local police.

A mysterious, small ball of light was seen by a witness at the ancient Avebury Henge in Wiltshire, England.

The Provost and Security Services were used to dealing with UFO reports, said Lees, and a friend of his in the P&SS was dispatched early the next day to interview the woman—amid much hilarity on the part of his colleagues, all of whom thought that the story was someone's idea of a joke. On returning, however, Lees's friend and colleague had a very serious and grim look on his face and informed him guardedly that whatever had taken place, it was definitely no hoax.

The woman, he said, had practically barricaded herself in her home, was almost incoherent with fear, and only agreed to return to the scene after lengthy coaxing. Lees's colleague said that he found no evidence of the UFO. The worm, or whatever it was, was clearly long gone. On the ground near the standing-stone, however, was a three-foot-long trail of a slimelike substance, not unlike that left by a snail. Lees's colleague quickly improvised and, after racing back to the woman's house, scooped some of the material onto a spoon and into a drinking glass.

After assuring the woman that her case would be taken very seriously and requesting that she discuss the events with no one, he headed back to the base, the slimy substance in hand. A report was duly prepared and dispatched up the chain of command—along with the unidentified slime. For more than a week, said Lees, plainclothes military personnel wandered casually among the stones, seeking out evidence of anything unusual. Nothing else was ever found, however.

Lees said that he was fascinated by this incident because it was one of the few UFO-related cases he heard about that was taken very seriously at an official level and had some form of material evidence in support of it. He did not know the outcome of the investigation, but he never forgot about it, which is hardly surprising. Now we'll move on to a strange case that occurred in the 1990s and also had a Stonehenge angle attached to it.

In March 1997, the United Kingdom's Independent newspaper ran an article titled "Secret US Spyplane Crash May Be Kept under Wraps." In part, it stated: "A top-secret United States spyplane

which flies on the edge of space at five times the speed of sound crashed at the British experimental airbase at Boscombe Down, Hampshire, in September 1994, according to a report in a leading military aviation journal. The SAS [Special Air Service], the report said, was scrambled to throw a cordon round the wreckage, which was flown back to the US two days later. The hypersonic reconnaissance aircraft, called Astra or Aurora, is believed to have been developed in the 1980s as a secret US government 'black program.'"

The explanation from British officials that the mysterious craft was nothing stranger than a Tornado aircraft has been met with rolling eyes and shaking heads, particularly since the Tornado in question actually came down in August 1994 and not late one night in September of that year. National Archives papers on the affair state the following:

"The only flying that took place that night was the launch of two Royal Navy Sea King helicopters in support of an exercise. Claims that members of the public were turned away by police roadblocks may have arisen from some confusion over dates. On August 12, 1994, a Tornado participating in a trial made an emergency landing there after the decoy target under trial failed to jettison. The Tornado landed with a trailing 375-foot steel cable and, for safety reasons, roads close to Boscombe Down were closed while the aircraft passed overhead. We are aware of press reports regarding an aircraft known as 'Aurora'. The Ministry of Defense has no knowledge of any U.S. aircraft with this designation operating in UK airspace. The existence of such a program would, in any case, be a matter for the US Government to confirm."

So much for the official story; let's now take a look at the unofficial version. It was around 11:00 P.M. on September 26, 1994, when a small, twintailed aircraft crash-landed onto the lengthy runway at Boscombe Down, which is situated in the English county of Wiltshire. At around the time of the incident, a number of aviation enthusiasts were listening in on air-band radios and were aware that something untoward had taken place.

The Boscombe Down is a Royal Air Force site for testing aircraft. It is not surprising that one might hear a story like the one in 1994 about strange aircraft and flashing lights in the region.

The following day, several of those same enthusiasts drove to the installation—which is near the A303 road that is not at all far from Stonehenge—and were apprehended by local police who had

set up roadblocks to keep away prying eyes. Before being ushered away, however, a number of people succeeded in catching sight of a disabled aircraft. It was situated at the end of the runway and, aside from its twin tail fins, was completely covered over by tarpaulins.

Air Force Monthly magazine was soon on the trail of the truth. In the November 1994 issue of the magazine, investigative writers noted that in the wake of the crash, both a Boeing 757 and a C-5 Galaxy arrived at Boscombe Down. The story continued that the secret plane was loaded aboard the Galaxy and flown to "Air Force plant 42 at Palmdale, California." Air Force Monthly suggested that the aircraft "was a TR-3A, the existence of which the U.S. Government has yet to officially acknowledge." The subsonic, stealth TR-3A—also referred to as the Black Manta—remains an enigma since its existence has never been officially confirmed.

The account of the crash at Boscombe Down is made all the more intriguing by a story that was published in the United Kingdom's Salisbury Times newspaper on August 23, 1994—just about a month before all hell broke loose at Boscombe Down. The location: the aforementioned A303 road. The article states: "A green flying saucer hovered beside the A303 road at Deptford last week—according to a lorry driver who rushed to Salisbury police station in the early hours of the morning. The man banged on the station door in Wilton Road at 1:30 A.M. on Thursday after spotting the saucer suspended in mid-air. 'He was 100 per cent convinced it was a UFO,' said Inspector Andy Shearing. The man said it was bright green and shaped like a triangle with rounded corners. It also had green and white flashing lights. Other drivers had seen it and were flashing their car lights at him. A patrol car took the driver back to the spot but there was no trace of the flying saucer.

Inspector Shearing said police had been alerted about similar sightings in the same area in the past."

Although the Salisbury Times called the object a "flying saucer," the description of it being "shaped like a triangle with rounded corners" sounds very much like the TR-3A or the Aurora. It's also a near-perfect description of equally unidentified aircraft that have become known within ufology as "flying triangles," but here's the most important issue: the witness reported that the object he saw was "suspended in mid-air." This is particularly fascinating, as rumors have been longstanding that the TR-3A has hovering capabilities.

Is it feasible that the aircraft seen hovering beside the A303 in the early hours of an August 1994 morning was the very same one that came crashing down on the runway at nearby Boscombe Down a month later? I would say yes, it's extremely feasible. Today, more than two decades later, the events at Boscombe Down remain shrouded in mystery and secrecy.

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